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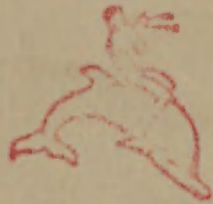
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One Year of Pierrot











*Where the pines began, there was a small house of stone*



# One Year of Pierrot

*by Emily, Elizabeth, and  
Lester G. Hornby*

*With Illustrations*

BY LESTER G. HORNBY



Boston and New York  
Houghton Mifflin Company  
The Riverside Press Cambridge

1917

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TO  
D. J. B.



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*From drawings by Lester G. Hornby*







# One Year of Pierrot

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## CHAPTER I

WHEN I heard the first cry of my Pierrot, my heart stood still. I remember it well, for who could forget so wonderful a thing? A minute before that, I was alone and praying the good Christ to permit me to die and join Pierre. It was six months since He had taken Pierre from me. We had come to this town of Beaulieu so that Pierre could work in the big rose garden of Monsieur Angoul. Pierre knew all about the growing of roses. We lived in the cottage of Jean Lacroix, which is on the shore of the sea—the big blue Mediterranean, and on a clear day we could look across the water to the island of Corsica. Our room was upstairs on the side nearest the sea, so that we heard the waves on the shore all night long. It was here that Pierre died after we had been married only four months. He died in the night, and he held my hand, and we listened to the waves. It was just like this that we slept always and it was just like this that he died, holding my

hand as tight as he could. We had been married only four months. In Paris in the month of April we were married, and he died in the month of August holding my hand tight. After that it was very hard for me to live.

I was a stranger and there was not much work for me to do. Some people did not like it because they thought Pierre had caused Monsieur Angoul to discharge two men of the town who worked for him, but Pierre really had nothing to do about that. He told me this before he died. But even if I had no friends, it was necessary to remain, because I had no money and because I had nowhere else to go. There was the father of Pierre, but he was poor and my own father and mother were dead. I do not know what I should have done if I had not found work with Monsieur Jack Martin, the American artist, who permitted me to scrub the floors and clean the windows in his villa. He was a very sad man and a very rich man and he paid me ten francs a week. But I had many things to buy and much sewing to do, and the rent of the room where Pierre and I lived was four francs a week. Madame Lacroix said I should give up my room and go to the hospital, but I thought if I did that, I should lose my mind. Madame Lacroix said I was a little fool and deserving pity of no one and so did everyone else except Monsieur Jack Martin. He never scolded me though I do not understand it, for he scolded everyone else. I told him nothing, but the day



*We lived in the cottage of Jean Lacroix, which is on the  
shore of the sea*





before Pierrot was born he came to the house to find me, and when Madame Lacroix told him how it was with me, he sent to me Doctor Jambeau, who was a very great doctor.

At the beginning I did not like Doctor Jambeau because he tried to make me live and I did not wish to live. Until I heard that little cry in the dark, I prayed as hard as I could for the good Christ to permit me to die. It was in the night and I heard the waves crawling up the shore as if they were sobbing and then crawling back again as if they were sighing, and I thought of Pierre and did not wish to be alone. It is terrible to be alone. Then I heard the cry of Pierrot and I was not alone any more.

*Mon Dieu*—how can I tell all I felt? There was so much and it came so quickly that it makes me hold my breath even now to think of it. One minute I was trying as hard as I could to die and the next minute I was trying as hard as I could to live. One minute I was beating the good Doctor Jambeau with my hands and the next minute I was holding him by the sleeve because I was afraid he would go away. I hear his big, deep voice now.

“Quiet, Madame.”

Then it was just a few minutes later that I heard him say:

“It is a boy, Madame.”

That very second the call of Pierrot to me cut into my sick heart like a knife and let out all the

bitterness, and I was laughing and crying all at once. I remember how I laughed and how I cried, and it was the same thing. On the shore in the dark under my windows the waves were laughing too and crying too, and it was the same thing. I remember how I thought it was not Pierrot who was being born but myself. I felt new all over—so new that I ached. I thought Pierre was in the room with me. He kissed my lips. I thought the good Christ was in the room with me and placed His hand upon my head. I looked to see if Doctor Jambeau saw Him too, but he was looking at my Pierrot. So I said:

“If you please, may I not see my baby?”

“Have patience,” he said.

A little later he sat in the corner of the room with my baby in his lap. I tried to rise to my elbow and see, but I could not.

“Have a care not to drop him,” I said.

“I will do what I can,” he said. “But I never saw such a man of a baby.”

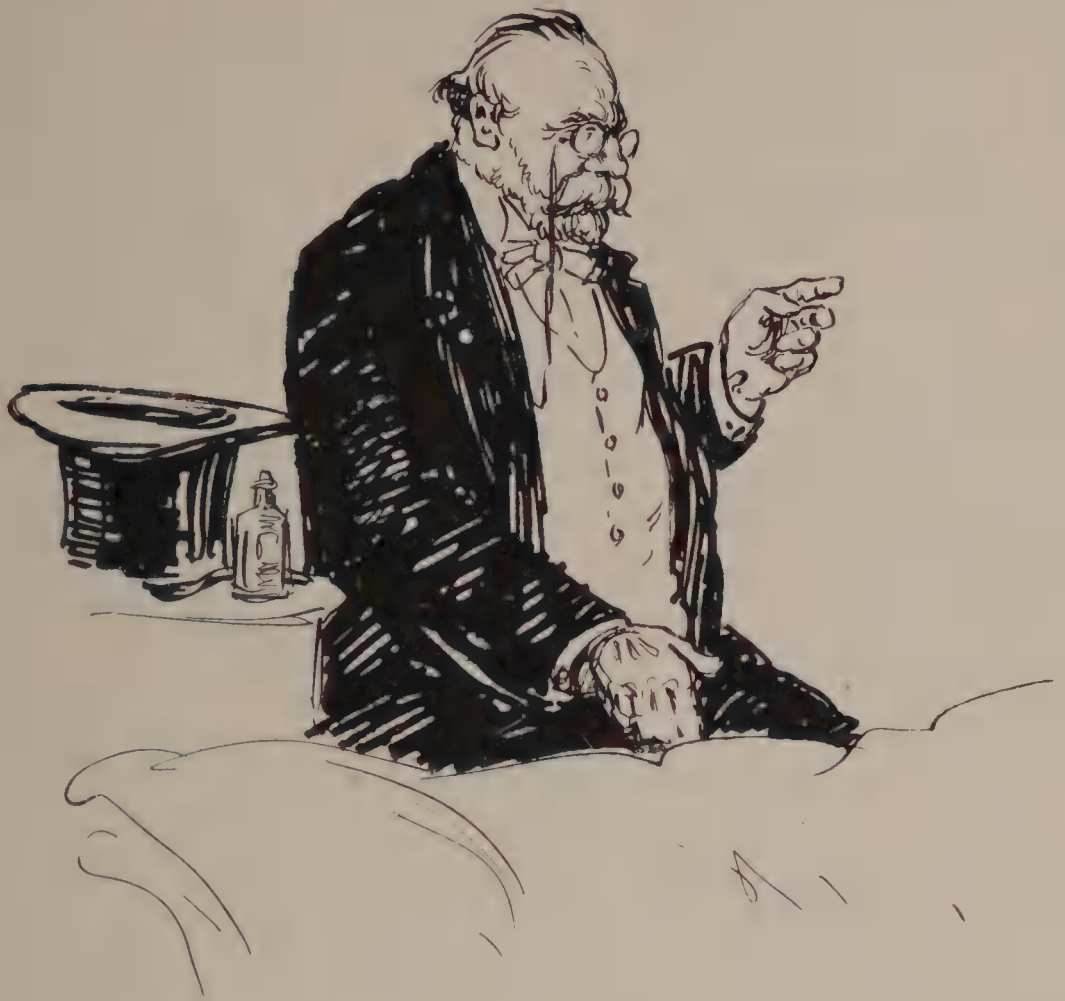
Then for the second time Pierrot cried. He cried for me, knowing my voice even then.

“He wishes his mother,” I said. “Give him to me.”

“Patience,” he answered. “If I mistake not, you will have all you wish of him after I have finished.”

He said that. Doctor Jambeau, who should know better, said that. I fell back on the pillow and held one hand with the other trying hard to





*Dr. Jambeau, who was a very great doctor*



be patient. You understand I had never seen my baby. And for almost a half-hour I did not see my baby. I do not know even to-day what kept me in my bed. It was only because I was so dizzy, I think. After being born into a new world, a little time is necessary in which to become steady. But when Pierrot cried for me again, I said to Doctor Jambeau:

"I am going to rise. You do not know how to put on his little clothes."

"It is not possible in a minute to put clothes upon an eel," he said.

"You must not call my baby by such names," I said. He laughed at this. I remember how he laughed, and I see now myself that I was very silly. But I am telling things just as they happened—every little thing from the minute Pierrot came. I wish to remember the silly things and the wise things, the little things and the big things. I do not always know which are which, so I put down everything.

When I heard Doctor Jambeau rise from his chair to bring my baby to me, my heart stood still once again. I closed my eyes. I heard the doctor come nearer and nearer and then he was by my side.

"*Hélas!*" he cried. "How do you expect to see your baby with your eyes tight closed?"

I tried to catch my breath, which had left me. I could not speak. All that it was possible for me to do was to hold out my arms. Then he placed



Pierrot on my breast and I folded my arms around my baby. I remember how all the ache went out of me. Until then my chest had felt hollow but the moment the blankets around Pierrot touched me, the hollowness went. It was as if Doctor Jambeau had been holding my heart in his hands and had now put it back.

Oh, I shall never forget the fulness of my heart and my soul as I felt Pierrot in my arms for the first time! It was as if I held the whole of the blue sea—the whole of the blue sea and the whole of the blue sky and the whole of the sunshiny shore as far as one can see or think. All I saw of Pierrot was the top of his downy head, which was so tender I could watch his heart beat there. I kissed that place as lightly as I could, just touching it with my lips, for it was very soft. His heart kissed me back. It was the first time I had been kissed since Pierre died. It was so wonderful it made my throat ache. His head smelled like a rose-leaf. From the very beginning my Pierrot was wonderful and beautiful—like a rosebud with a heart. He slept without moving and I felt him through the blankets. I heard him breathe—quick, short breaths, as though he had been long running to reach me. He breathed four breaths to my one.

Before Doctor Jambeau left he stood before me with a frown above his beard and his finger held out stiff.

“He is to sleep and you are to sleep—that is all,” he told me.

"My son shall sleep," I said. "As for me, I must watch. Perhaps he will be hungry."

"Bah!" he told me in a voice that frightened me. "You mothers are little fools—all of you. That baby will not need anything to eat for twenty-four hours. He would not starve if he did not have anything to eat for two days. You are the one to eat. Monsieur Martin has given orders to Madame Lacroix here to serve you and give you what is necessary. I will tell her what to do."

"Monsieur Jack Martin has done that?" I said.

"Yes," Doctor Jambeau told me. "Now mind; no talking, no thinking."

"You will tell Monsieur Jack Martin how much——"

But he would not listen and went out and left me alone with Pierrot.

He left me alone with Pierrot, and the moment the door closed behind him it was as if he had left me alone to guard the world. My Pierrot was so gentle, so small, so newly-come that I was afraid to move. I put my ear close down beside him so that I could hear every breath. I wondered if he had air enough and if he had too much air. Every time the salt breeze from the sea moved the curtains, I put up my hand to warn it away from Pierrot. I remember how quiet it was. I thought the whole world had stopped so that Pierrot might sleep. That hour before the dawn was like a great prayer and I prayed too, but never as I prayed before. I did not pray for myself; I

prayed for Pierrot. I prayed for the year to come and the year after that, and the year after that, until before I was done he had grown into a big man. And always the waves rolled up and rolled back again as though singing to Pierrot. Outside it was like a big church and inside it was like a shrine. Only sometimes it made me ache to think that I was all alone here guarding the world. It was always so when Pierrot slept.

Then I fell asleep myself. When I woke up, it was broad daylight and Madame Lacroix was in the room. At first I did not understand why she was there, and then I pulled off the blanket to see if Pierrot still breathed. God be praised, he still breathed! He moved and gave a little cry, and I held up my finger to Madame Lacroix and patted the blankets. But she said I must drink some broth and she would take the baby. I put my arms around Pierrot when she said that. I must be honest and tell that I did not like Madame Lacroix. I was afraid she would do harm to Pierrot. She was a big woman, as strong as a man, and she had a hard face. I remember people said her face was hard because she bore no children, but I do not know about that. Her husband Jean was like a servant in her house, but I liked Jean. If a beggar came to the door it was well if he saw Jean before he saw Madame. And Jean had a dog who licked his heels but who always barked at Madame.

"You shall not touch my baby," I said.



"*Eh bien*," she told me, her face growing red. "Then you are a little fool."

"But this is my baby," I said.

"It is the little fools like you who have babies," she told me. "And you have not a sou with which to care for him."

I do not know what I said then. Perhaps I cried, for though the rent of the room was paid, I knew I did not have much left after that.

"Tut, tut," she said. "Be a good girl now. It is what Doctor Jambeau said."

"I wish he had sent me someone else," I said. "You do not know about little babies."

"Eh? I do not know about babies?" she said to me. "I with a sister who has two and a cousin who has four and a third cousin who has seven? I suppose it is you who know about babies—you with one brat not yet born four hours!"

She reached over and took Pierrot from me, and I—what could I do? Besides I knew it was the wish of Doctor Jambeau and so I put my lips together and said nothing. But I made ready to leap from the bed if I heard Pierrot cry. She gave Pierrot water from a spoon and put fresh clothes upon him and all the time she said, "La, la, la," to him and he said not a word. Then she brought me my broth and while I tried to eat, she walked up and down the room with my Pierrot in her arms. He was very good with her and very brave. From the first Pierrot was afraid of nothing. No man and no woman, no beast and no bird ever



frightened him. He was like a soldier. I have seen him pull the beard of a noble count and only laugh; I have seen him pull the beard of big Gaston Battaille, who, as everyone thought, was a very wicked man and to be feared, and yet Pierrot feared not. I have seen him scratch the face of a wild dog of the village called L'Ogre and only cry when he was snatched away by a *gendarme* with a pistol, who said it was only by a miracle he was saved alive though George Debaux said the ogre kissed Pierrot even while Pierrot scratched his eyes. But Pierrot was older then—almost five months. I do not think those things were as brave as walking with Madame Lacroix when he had been born only four hours.

Madame Lacroix would not give me back my baby until I had eaten all my broth, even the last spoonful, so I ate it all. Then she laid Pierrot in my arms and I was glad. It was as if he had been gone a year.

"You see it is I and not you who know about babies," said Madame Lacroix.

That may be true, but Pierrot did not lie against her breast as he lay against mine. He was glad to be home again, I can tell you. As for me, I was so glad to have him safe once more, I fell asleep.

## CHAPTER II

EVERYONE, even at the first, was so good to Pierrot. It was as if a Pierrot had been born to everyone in Beaulieu. That was because he was such a wonderful baby. There were other babies in the village—many of them—but there was only one Pierrot. He was altogether different from them all. That was quite clear when people began to be good to him even before they saw him.

On the day that Pierrot was two days old Doctor Jambeau would permit no one to see him except Madame Lacroix and yet Monsieur Jack Martin sent, in the morning, a basket of roses from his own garden. And when Madame was not looking, Jean poked through the door a doll for Pierrot. It was a beautiful doll which Jean made with his knife from a stick. I was very much afraid Madame might see it and take it away, so when Doctor Jambeau came, I asked him to give it to me and I hid it in the bed. Then Jules Demar, who had worked with Pierre in the garden of Monsieur Angoul—a young man from Switzerland—sent my Pierrot a bag of sweets. Doctor Jambeau would permit him to have none of them, but I kept them where he could see them.

Then Lucille Corbeau, the little lame girl on the corner near the bakeshop, sent him a tin box full of shells which she had picked up on the beach. So you see.

But all that first morning, all that first afternoon, all that night Doctor Jambeau would permit Pierrot to have nothing to eat. It was terrible. My heart ached for my little man. Twice Pierrot felt around with his lips. If he had cried then, I think I should have disobeyed Doctor Jambeau. But Pierrot was brave. He was braver than his mother. He fell asleep while I remained awake and prayed to have strength to wait.

What these doctors do not understand is how very little a very little baby is. It is one thing to give an order to a man, "You shall not eat," and another to give such an order to a baby as small as Pierrot. What did Pierrot know of Doctor Jambeau and his orders? He knew only that he was hungry and that very near to him there was food and that the one in all the world he trusted most heeded not his needs. That was what I did not like. I feared Pierrot would not understand and would think his mother willingly caused him pain. It is not right to blame Pierrot if towards the end he cried a little. *Ma foi*, if I were hungry and food were before me and my Pierre had told me without explaining that I must not eat, I should have cried more than Pierrot. He did very well.

When on the second morning Doctor Jambeau





*The corner near the bakeshop, where Lucille Corbeau lived*





came in, I told him at once I could not eat another mouthful myself until my baby had broken his fast.

"He is very good but he cannot live upon air," I said.

I think he saw at last that I must have my way in this, for he only nodded.

"Very well," he said. "But understand—for to-day only twenty minutes by the clock. Then in six hours another twenty minutes by the clock. So—only four dinners may that starving rascal have."

That morning I nursed my Pierrot for the first time. It was as wonderful as when I held my baby for the first time. Each thing I did for Pierrot made him more and more part of me, but this made him of my very self. His eyes not yet open, he pressed his warm lips against my breast and I felt them and closed my own eyes for joy. He nursed as though famished and then slept a little and then nursed once more. I knew I was giving of my strength to him, and it was so good to share that with Pierrot. It is possible to share many things with those we love but it is only possible to share like this with one's baby. It was as if he drank with his food also my love and my prayers. From the moment I first heard his cry I had loved my Pierrot, but it was not until now that I felt myself to be really and truly the mother of Pierrot. Until now Pierrot had been like some great gift of God at which I could only marvel as

if I had no part in it, but it was never like that again after Pierrot had lain at my breast. He was still of God, for only God could give so wonderful a gift, but he was of me too. And though to some it may not seem gracious to the good God to feel as I did, I must be honest and tell that it made me glad to have him of me too.

After this, when Madame Lacroix took my baby to care for, I did not mind so much as at first. I knew that even if Pierrot suffered Madame to walk with him, it was to me he must always return for his strength. Now I could drink my broth and watch her carry him back and forth singing, "La, la, la," to him without any great desire to leap from my bed. I am glad to tell this because I do not like anyone to think I bore ill-will towards Madame or that I was altogether a little fool even if she said I was. But sometimes I thought she came to my room and took my Pierrot more often than was necessary. Once that day, when he was sleeping, she seized him from my arms and he cried. So I said:

"I see no reason why you should trouble him now."

"Bah! what do you know about it?" she said to me.

"I know when he rests," I said.

"You know nothing—nothing at all," she told me. "The good God should give babies to those who know about babies." She said this in such a terrible voice I was frightened.

"How is one to know about babies unless one has a baby?" I asked of her.

I did not mean any more than I said, but she grew very red in the face and looked at me in such a way that I would have hidden beneath the blanket had I not been afraid she would do harm to Pierrot.

"You say that to me," she said in a voice so loud it made my Pierrot start. "You who have not yet been born eighteen years say that to me who saw babies before your mother was born. That is enough to show how much you know!"

And all the time that she was putting fresh clothes upon Pierrot she talked to herself, and whenever she saw my eyes, she said, "Bah."

I think her man Jean must have heard her, for after she had gone, the door to my room opened a little way—not more than the thickness of a card—and Jean spoke to me in a whisper.

"It goes well?" he said.

"Oh, yes, Monsieur Jean," I said. "And with you?"

"As always," he said. "Do not heed what Madame says to you. It is her way."

"I know," I said. "After a little I will not heed."

"And the baby is well?" he said.

"Oh, he is wonderful, Monsieur Jean!" I said. "Would you like to see my baby?"

For a moment he did not speak, and then the door opened wider.



"Can I see from here?" he said.

"Of course you cannot," I said. "But if you come here by my side, I will show you the top of his head."

"If Madame ever learned," he said, "*Mon Dieu*, she would kill me! But I should love to see him."

He was so very much frightened that I could not help laughing and that gave him courage. So looking back over his shoulder, he came in and I raised the blanket just a little. He leaned over and saw. Then he said to me:

"*Mon Dieu*—what a wonderful baby!"

"You think so?" I said.

"I never saw such a wonderful baby," he told me.

"And you have met many other babies so that you know?" I said, because I wished to make sure he understood about babies.

"Thousands of babies but never another like this one," he said.

I always liked Monsieur Jean. He was a very fine man and it is a great pity that he was unhappily married. He put his hand in his pocket and found there a bag containing ten marbles.

"He would like these?" he said.

"Thank you," I said. "I will keep them till he wakes." He went out then on the tip of his toes as he had come in and closed the door behind him softly so that Pierrot should not hear. But a moment later my heart stood still, for I knew by the loud talk below that Madame had discovered

him. She was scolding in her most terrible voice.

"You good-for-nothing," she said to Jean. "You dared go into that room when I commanded you not to go even upon the stairs?"

I trembled for fear Jean would tell that I had asked him to enter and that then Madame would come to me. But Jean said nothing. Then I was sorry that he said nothing, for I heard the sound of blows and knew that Jean was receiving them for me. I tried to call out the truth to Madame, but Pierrot moved in his blankets so that I did not dare call again. It was necessary for me to lie there and hear those blows until I felt sick at heart and faint. It was so cruelly done that I thought I could never permit Madame to touch Pierrot again, and I put my arms tight around him and tried not to hear. But it was necessary to listen in order to know when the blows stopped and then I heard her say this:

"You beggar of the street, it is well possible you have killed them both. That would serve you well—eh? To be hung upon a gibbet for all the world to point at and say, 'There hangs the worthless husband of Madame Lacroix.' That would give me a fine name—eh?"

Those were terrible words and I heard Jean say something but I know not what. Then I heard her say:

"It matters nothing if you remained but the half of a second. Doctor Jambeau said no one

■

was to open that door. If both die in the night of a cold, then it is you who are the cause. Out of the house with you."

I heard the door close and knew that Jean had gone to think over all she said. I myself grew afraid, not for myself but for Pierrot. I had lifted the blanket for only a moment and had put it back quickly and the door had not been open very wide, but Pierrot was so small and had been here such a little while that sometimes I felt that if I missed as much as one breath myself, then he too would stop breathing. He was so very near to Heaven from which he had just come that it seemed as if the lightest wind might blow him back again. So I did not dare sleep until after Doctor Jambeau came. I said nothing to him, but I watched him sharply as he took Pierrot and looked at him and then I said:

"He is quite well?"

"I know a Countess who would give ten thousand francs if her baby were as well as this rascal," he told me. "But he must have his bath. I will call Madame Lacroix."

So I breathed better after that, and when Madame came in I told her what the doctor said, in hope she would tell Jean, but she answered nothing. Then Doctor Jambeau said to Madame:

"Do you know how to bathe an infant?"

"But, yes, certainly," said Madame.

"Then," he said, "make a fire in that stove and I will watch and see."



When Madame went out to find wood, I said to Doctor Jambeau:

"Is it not possible for me myself to bathe my Pierrot?"

"Bah!" he said. "Do you play the Countess while you can."

"But I do not like to play the Countess if so it is played," I said.

He threw back his head when I said that and laughed until the tears came into his eyes, and then he stopped and came to my side and put his hand upon my head and said so gently that it was as if some other man were speaking:

"My child, it is the Countess who should play the mother of Pierrot for a little. But *hélas!*—it would be easier for you to play the Countess than for the Countess to play you. So it goes in this world."

"Who is this Countess you tell me of?" I said.

Then he told me of the Countess de Beauchamp, who too had a little baby born one week before my Pierrot, and the baby was very ill indeed, and would not eat. This little baby, who some day would be a noble Count if he lived, found nothing at his mother's breast and turned from all other breasts and from all other food. The good Doctor Jambeau shook his head sadly and, as for me, my heart bled for the Countess.

"But why is it the Countess has nothing for her baby?" I said to Doctor Jambeau.



"She has not lived as you have lived," he said to me.

"But she has had everything with which to live, and I have had nothing," I said.

"So. It is better to have too little than too much," he said with a sad smile. "She has had too much."

I did not understand and do not yet understand, for with money it is possible to buy many things, but after this, if ever I wished myself a great lady, I thought of this noble Countess and her little baby.

"I will pray for her," I said.

"She needs your prayers," he said to me. "I will tell her that you pray for her."

Madame Lacroix came back with her apron full of wood and made a great fire in the white porcelain stove, and soon the room was very warm. Then near the stove she placed a basin of water, and Doctor Jambeau gave to her a cloth and some soap, and some oil which he had brought with him. He sat back in his chair after that and said nothing and looked at her as she took Pierrot from his blanket and his bands. It was then for the first time I saw all of my Pierrot. He was very red but he was so fat I laughed. He was beautiful from his head to his little toes, which were curled up. There were creases all over him, he was so fat. But when Madame stooped and raised my Pierrot, Doctor Jambeau called to her.

"Attention," he said. "He is not a sausage,

that baby, to be seized like that. Hold him beneath the arms."

"I know," said Madame Lacroix. "I was preparing to do that."

I was so fearful she might drop my Pierrot that I rose to my elbow and then Doctor Jambeau called out to me. He was terrible, and with a glance of his eye made both men and women obey him. I fell back again but I could see. For all Madame pretended to know, she knew nothing. It was necessary for him to show her everything. *Ma foi*, she would bathe my Pierrot as if he were a soiled rag, and he with his eyes but scarcely opened. And yet every time Doctor Jambeau told her to do this or to do that she said to him, "I know. I was preparing to do that."

Her hands were very large and she was not so gentle as I liked, but after her fashion she made him clean and rubbed him with oil and put him back in his clothes without mishap. I was glad enough when he came home. After this I gave him his dinner, and while he nursed hungrily, I prayed for the Countess and the little Count.

### CHAPTER III

IT was in the night when I was nursing my Pierrot for the fourth time that I heard a noise outside my door. I thought it was a mouse and said nothing. All was quiet for a minute and then the noise came again, and it was not like a mouse that time. So I called as low as I could:

"Who goes there?"

I received no answer, and then I became afraid and called louder:

"Who goes there?"

Then I heard the voice of Monsieur Jean.

"In the name of God," he said in a whisper, "do not call."

"What do you wish, Jean?"

"You still live?" he said.

"Have you gone foolish?" I said to him.

"And the baby—he still lives?" he said in a voice that shook. Then I remembered what Madame had told him and I almost laughed and almost cried. It was the middle of the night, and there was poor Jean out there in the cold come to see if we both lived. It was a very brave thing I can tell you, and yet people about the village laughed at him as a coward. If Madame had



*Jean Lacroix*





found him, I do not like to think of what she would have done. There was a man in that Jean.

"Enter and see if we both live," I said to him.

"*Mon Dieu*, I dare not," he said to me. "It is enough—to hear your voice."

But I could not let him go after he had dared so much without telling him how brave I thought he was, so I said to him:

"Enter, I wish a glass of water."

Then he opened the door and closed it softly behind him and stood in the dark.

"Have you a match?" I said.

"It is better if I do not strike a match," he said.

"The water is on the table," I said. "But take care. And Jean—it was gallant of you not to tell Madame it was I who asked you to enter."

"Would a man do anything else, Madame?" he said.

"Not you, Jean."

"And the little one—he is well?"

"You should see him eat," I said. "He is like a famished soldier."

"God be praised," he said.

"Madame wished only to make you afraid," I told him.

"I went to the church and prayed all the day. It is that which saved you both."

"Thank you, Jean."

"I will bring you the water," he said.

Then he moved slowly towards the table and the next thing I heard was when he fell over a chair and came to the floor with a noise like a cannon. I held my breath and for a moment he did not move, and then he rose.

“Run!” I said. “Run as fast as you can!”

But that Jean—what do you think he did? He went on and brought me the glass of water before he would run to save himself.

It is one thing to tell about such matters after they have passed, but it is another thing to live through them. I shook all over so that I could not hold the glass, while he ran out as quick as he could. And then I did not dare move for the matter of an hour. And yet nothing came of this. Madame did not wake and never knew.

On the day that my Pierrot was three days old Monsieur Jack Martin sent me a letter by the post which I have saved. He wrote like this:

“Villa Cornice.

“DEAR MADAME:

“Doctor Jambeau informs me that you have a very fine son. Please accept my congratulations. I trust that when you are sufficiently recovered, you will do me the favour of entering my service as housekeeper. I will pay you thirty francs per week and furnish room and board for you and your son. There is no haste, but I thought you might like to keep this in mind in case you have no other plans.

"With best wishes for yourself and your son, I remain,

"Sincerely yours,

"J. R. MARTIN."

It made me cry—that letter. And it made me very proud, too, that he called little Pierrot my "son." To see it written down like that, it was as if Pierrot were already a big man.

Until I received that letter from Monsieur Jack Martin, I knew not where I should go with Pierrot when I had the strength to leave my bed, nor what I should do. It had been very difficult to earn enough for rent and for food when I was alone, and I knew that with my baby it would be even more difficult. I had seen that people do not like to have about their houses babies that are not their own. Every time Madame came into the room I thought of this and had fear.

But now here was this Monsieur Jack Martin, who was a single man and difficult to please and very sad, who asked me to come to his villa with Pierrot. He would give me thirty francs a week! It was like a miracle performed by the good God. I hid the letter beneath my pillow, and when Madame came in I told her nothing about it, but I cared not after that what she said to me, and nothing about her "Bahs" either. She might "Bah" at me all day long and I cared nothing.

But when Doctor Jambeau came in, I showed the letter to him and he read it.



"That is good," he said.

"You think Monsieur Jack Martin will love my Pierrot?" I said.

"It is possible," he told me.

"But if Pierrot should cry!" I said.

"Babies so fat as he do not cry," said Doctor Jambeau.

"Good," I said. "Then will you tell Monsieur Jack Martin that I will come and that he has made me very happy?"

"I will do that," said Doctor Jambeau. "And I think it will be well for that villa to have a baby in it."

"I do not know," I said. "But if my Pierrot cries at night, then I will take him away. But it is true that in all his life he has never cried a long time."

"I will tell Monsieur Martin that. I will tell him that the mother—who, *ma foi*, should know—gives testimony of her son's good character."

"And will you tell Monsieur Jack Martin also that I wish no money until I have returned to him all he has done for me," I said.

"As you will," said Doctor Jambeau.

So that was all arranged and I felt very much at peace.

"I have another message for you," said Doctor Jambeau. "It is from the Countess."

"Her baby is better?"

"A little better, and she thanks you for your prayers."

"She need not thank me for those," I said. "They are but the prayers of one mother for another mother."

"Eh?" said Doctor Jambeau.

He looked at me in a very funny way for a moment, and I have always thought it strange.

"The prayers of one mother for another mother," he said over again. "That is true. Nothing is of importance between you but that. It is well."

It was on this day that Madame Lacroix had a great honour, for she took my Pierrot to the church to be christened. Though I gave him then the name of his father, Pierre, I always called him Pierrot because he was so small.

## CHAPTER IV

AS long as I was in my bed, Pierrot was like a beautiful doll—the most beautiful doll that was ever presented to a young girl at Christmas. I had nothing to do but hold him in my arms. Even when he lay at my breast, I had nothing to do but watch him and smooth his hair and perhaps moisten my finger and remove a speck from the corner of his eye. You would have laughed if you could have seen the face he made up when I did that. He drew back his head and squinted his eyes and pulled at me ferociously. Sometimes he ceased nursing and opened his eyes—they were big brown eyes—and for a minute looked at me as if about to speak, and then closed them again as if it were not worth the trouble. Perhaps twice in a nursing he would do that. At these times I feared as if a king were looking at me. I feared Pierrot would not find me as beautiful as he hoped. He knew many things even then—my Pierrot. He was thinking—all the time he was thinking—and not knowing of what he thought, it was possible to imagine anything. He thought and said nothing, which does not make one at ease.

As soon as I was strong enough to be about my

room, all was changed. Then I saw a thousand things to do for Pierrot. You would have thought Madame would have been glad of this, for it left her less to do, but on the contrary, she became angrier than ever. She did not wish me to leave my bed, and the first day I rose scolded me until I was back again.

"You had better leave the care of that baby to those who know," she said to me. "You see how fat and strong he is. Well—who has made him fat and strong? It is I. You had better keep your fingers out of this cake. He is not a doll for young girls to play with."

You would have thought I had nothing at all to do with Pierrot to hear her talk.

With the letter of Monsieur Jack Martin under my pillow I grew strong very quick, but Madame would not permit me to bathe my Pierrot.

"It is necessary to know how to do a thing like that," she told me. "It is possible you might drop him in the basin, and then he would drown before your eyes. How would you like that—eh?"

Another time she told me:

"It is possible you might drop soap into his eyes, and then he would be blind forever. How would you like that—eh?"

Yet another time she told me:

"It is possible he might fall from your knees, and then he would be always like Lucille Corbeau, who is lame. How would you like that—eh?"



All the time she bathed my Pierrot she told me of one terrible thing and then another that happened to an infant in the north of France and to an infant in the west of France and to an infant in the east of France, until it was as if Madame Lacroix were the only woman in all the world who has never done harm to an infant. At first such things made me tremble, but after a little she told me of so many I felt more like laughing.

And what do you think—she would not permit me even to wash the clothes of my Pierrot. She removed them from the room. But once, when she brought them back all fresh and clean, I took his little shirt and washed it again. I did that just to show who was the mother of Pierrot, and I hid it outside the window to dry and did not let Madame know.

When I was dressed and about my room, Doctor Jambeau said that Lucille might come in to see me, so I told Jean who came to the door one day when Madame was out of the house. Jean told Lucille and Lucille came as I heard afterwards, but Madame would not permit her to enter to see my Pierrot. Jean told me this and I was very angry. The next day I watched from the window, and when I saw Lucille come down the street with her poor lame leg, I called from the window and told her to come up the stairs very softly, and she did. She put her arms around my neck and cried upon my shoulder.

"La," I said to her, "there is nothing to cry about. Why do you cry?"

"You were so near to death," she said.

"What do you mean?" I said. "I have not been near to death."

"But Madame—even yesterday—told me she did not know if you would live."

"She is marvellous, that Madame," I said to Lucille. "She is the most marvellous liar in all France. Come and see my Pierrot. He sleeps upon the bed."

So I took her by the arm and helped her to the side of Pierrot. I drew back the blanket a little and she looked. Then she put her hands together beneath her chin.

"He is so beautiful," she said. "He is so beautiful I think that I should pray."

"There is no harm," I said. "He is but lately come from Heaven."

So she prayed a little and I prayed with her. She prayed, as she had often prayed at the shrines, for the good Christ to help her of her lameness. Now, though I would not speak of this to Father Joseph, I saw no reason why Lucille should not pray for help to a baby lately come from God as well as to the image of a baby. And a marvellous thing came of this, as I shall tell at the proper time.

When it was the hour for me to nurse my Pierrot, I permitted Lucille to hold him for a moment, and I laughed because she held him as if he might break like the shell of an egg.

"Have no fear," I said. "My Pierrot is a man baby."

"He is an angel baby," said Lucille in a whisper. She was a fine girl—that Lucille Corbeau. Her father, who was a shoemaker, had married again, and this second woman did not like Lucille and called her good-for-nothing. Lucille made beautiful pieces of lace for the joy of making them beautiful. But no more did she finish a piece than this woman snatched it away and sold it, keeping every sou. Lucille showed me what she had begun for my Pierrot—working upon it in the dark after she was in bed. It was a collar to wear upon his coat.

Then Lucille and I talked, with Pierrot lying at my breast, of how some day we would take him to the sea-shore and watch him play with the shells. Lucille told of a place upon the hillside where she went often to knit beneath the olive trees, and we said we would take Pierrot there when he was able to walk. Then we spoke of a place along the road to Villefranche where many wild flowers grew, and we said we would take Pierrot there. We spoke of many other places to which we would go together when Pierrot was a young man.

"Pierrot will walk between us," I said. "He will hold your arm and hold my arm."

"Yes, yes," said Lucille. "And if the boys call to me 'Old Lane Foot,' then Pierrot will frighten them away."

"He will do more than that," I said. "They





*The road to Villefranche*



## CHAPTER V

THE next person to see my Pierrot was Monsieur Jack Martin. Every day he sent me something—roses from his garden, a glass of orange sweets, a bottle of wine, a basket of fruit, a chicken, and I do not know what. Every morning a boy came bearing a little package with a note pinned upon it which said:

“With the compliments of J. R. M.”

Yet all in the village said he was like a bear and to be feared. Once I heard Louis Dametti, who sells tobacco, say to his boy, when Monsieur Jack Martin had sent to him for some cigars:

“Make haste with those. Remember if you are late by so much as one minute, he will cleave off the top of your head. He is what they call in the Americas an Indian.”

You should have seen that boy run all the way.

Monsieur Farierre, who sells wine, told me, when I went there to wash the floors before Pierrot came, of this. Monsieur Jack Martin bought of him some wine—a dozen bottles. The next day Monsieur Jack Martin called him to the house and he went.



““This wine is sour,”” Monsieur Jack Martin told him.

““It is not possible,”” said Monsieur Farierre.

Monsieur Jack Martin brought forth the dozen bottles, one of which he had tasted. Then he poured some into a big glass and gave it to Monsieur Farierre and bade him drink. Monsieur Farierre drank a little and put down the glass.

““To my tongue it is sweet,”” he said.

““Then,”” said Monsieur Jack Martin, ““do me the favour to drink the rest of the bottle.””

Monsieur Farierre began to talk, but he did not speak four words before Monsieur Jack Martin seized a bottle and broke it at his feet. Then he seized another and broke that at his feet. Monsieur Farierre, thinking Monsieur Jack Martin had lost his wits, began to run, and Monsieur Jack Martin seized as many bottles as he could carry and ran after him. All the way to the store Monsieur Jack Martin followed and broke at the feet of Monsieur Farierre a bottle every time Monsieur Farierre turned to look over his shoulder. And when Monsieur Farierre was upon the point of calling a *gendarme*, Monsieur Jack Martin laughed and laughed and paid for every bottle, saying he regretted nothing save that he had not bought two dozen bottles.

I tell of these things to show how strange it was that when Monsieur Jack Martin had such a reputation in the village, he should be so kind to my Pierrot. But I found many times that it is

not possible to know people by what is said of them in the village.

It was on a Wednesday and the day my Pierrot was seventeen days old. His weight upon that day was eight whole pounds and nine ounces over, which Doctor Jambeau said was a very fine weight.

"It is neither too much nor too little," he said.

"And the baby of the Countess—how much is his weight?" I asked.

"The baby of the Countess does not yet weigh four pounds," he said with a slow shake of his head.

"Sometimes," I said, "it does not seem right that my Pierrot should thrive better than a noble Count."

"Would you exchange your baby for the noble Count?" he said to me.

My faith, he made me fear that moment—that Doctor Jambeau. I held my Pierrot as tight as I could and stood ready near the door.

"There, there," he said with a smile. "It is beyond understanding, but I do not think the Countess would exchange that poor little four pounds for your great, healthy eight pounds of boy."

"My Pierrot weighs eight pounds and nine ounces," I told him.

"Well," he said with a laugh, "it would do no good even to add for good measure that nine ounces."

"But I should not care if my Pierrot weighed



only four pounds, I would not exchange him for a noble Count weighing ten pounds," I told him.

"You see," he said, "such matters are very poorly arranged. But I have two things which I forgot."

He put his hand into a great bag which he always carried with him, and brought out a package.

"With the compliments of the Countess de Beauchamp," he said, giving it to me.

"From the Countess to me?" I said, not believing the Countess could remember me.

"She passed it to me with her own hands," he said. "I am certain it is not for me because it is too small."

I unfolded the paper, and there I found a beautiful dress for Pierrot. It was of fine linen with lace upon it like the web of a spider. It was such a dress as the noble Count himself might wear. It was such a gracious thing for this beautiful Countess to do—to remember my Pierrot when her heart was near to breaking over her own poor baby—that it made my throat ache. For a minute, as I held it, I could not speak. Then I said, trying hard not to cry because I know to cry is very silly:

"You will extend to her my respectful thanks?"

"Truly," said Doctor Jambeau.

I desired very much to return the compliment but could think of nothing to give but one of the shells Lucille had presented to Pierrot. So I chose one of these—a pretty pink one and handed it to Doctor Jambeau.

"For the baby," I said, "from Pierrot."

He took it and put it in his purse and said that he would present it that afternoon.

It was not until then that Doctor Jambeau remembered another thing. It was as he was leaving, and he turned back at the door.

"My faith," he said, "you would think I was the government post the way people send packages and messages by me. It was Monsieur Martin who asked me to learn if you and your son would receive him at three o'clock to-day."

It was so great an honour that for the second time this morning I found myself upon the point of crying.

"He is so very good," I said to Doctor Jambeau.

"Take him how you will, he is very interesting," said Doctor Jambeau. "You will receive him then?"

"I—receive Monsieur Jack Martin?" I said. "It is Monsieur Jack Martin who receives me. If you will have the goodness to tell Madame Lacroix so that she will not receive him first, I will thank you."

"That Madame Lacroix," he said with a laugh. "Sometimes I myself fear to enter. But you may trust Monsieur Martin to go where he will. Ah—those Americans! They are superior to kings."

And truly, I have thought sometimes that Monsieur Jack Martin must be a king in his own country. He spoke with such an air and walked

with such an air, fearing no man. He would talk with a prince or a beggar of the streets, and cared not which, if so the man pleased him. It was the same with women. He asked only that a woman should not tire him with her talk.

I began at once to make ready for Monsieur Jack Martin, putting all things in order about the room. I swept the floor and dusted the chairs and tried to wash the windows a little. Madame came up when I was doing that and stood with her hands upon her hips. She said nothing for a minute and watched me. Then she said:

"You are preparing for that American—eh?"

"Yes, Madame," I said.

Then she said:

"Have a care he does not steal that infant."

"What do you mean?" I said.

"I mean what I say," she told me. "Once in the town of Mentone there was a woman had an infant. My cousin told me about it. It was a fine infant and my cousin knows a woman who knew a woman who saw it. One day one of these Americans passed by and spoke to it. Another day this American passed by and gave it money. Well, it was not a week after this that the infant was seen no more nor the American either."

"But is it known that this American stole that baby?" I said.

"It is never possible to know such things absolutely," said Madame. "But they say this



infant was taken into the forests of America and grew up there like an animal and became a wild man. They tell stories to-day in Mentone about that infant."

"Well," I said, "it was not Monsieur Jack Martin who stole that infant, was it?"

"It was an American and they are all the same," she said.

I tell this not because it is true, but because for a long time I was sorry she told it to me. It is not possible to forget such things in a minute, and sometimes, when I awoke at night, I thought of that baby in the forests.

At two o'clock I dressed myself, and then I put upon Pierrot the gown that Madame the Countess had given to me. You should have seen him. He looked like a young noble. It was as if he were made for fine dresses. And he wore it like a noble too. It was always so with my Pierrot—whatever you put upon him, he carried it like a prince. I remember once that Monsieur Jack Martin placed upon the thumb of my Pierrot a ring of the value of a fortune, and Pierrot wore it as if it were a piece of string. It became his hand well, but as for him, he cared nothing about it. It was as if where he came from he had so many things of that kind to play with that they were no longer of interest to him. I remember Monsieur Jack Martin said something strange about this.

"It is possible that before he came here he was a prince," he said.



I do not know. But that is what Monsieur Jack Martin said.

It was as the clocks in the church were striking three that Madame Lacroix came up with a card in her hand, which she held on the edge between her two fingers. Her face was like the sky before a shower.

"Bah," she said as she threw it in my lap, "we are getting to be a very fine lady—eh?"

"It is not my fault," I said. "I did not give you the card."

"He is below," she said.

"Shall I go below to see him?" I said.

"Bah. I do not care if you go below or above," she said. "But have a care of that infant."

Then I looked up and saw Monsieur Jack Martin at my door, and I could not move and I knew my cheeks were very red. He entered with his hat in one hand and with roses in the other.

"Well," he said, "may I come in?"

"Please," I said.

Madame made him a curtsey and hastened to leave, while I myself was unable to move.

He approached me and gave me the roses.

I held the baby towards him.

"This is Pierrot," I said.

## CHAPTER VI

NOW this was the first time my Pierrot ever saw Monsieur Jack Martin, and yet he was not afraid. He opened his eyes a moment and looked at Monsieur Jack Martin and then closed them again. And Monsieur Jack Martin looked at him a moment and then reached down and took him. If ever I had thought my Pierrot was already grown into a man, I did not think so when I saw him in the arms of Monsieur Jack Martin. There he did not look as big as a kitten. He was so high in the air I feared for him. But Pierrot feared nothing and continued with his nap. I waited to hear what Monsieur Jack Martin would say, but he said nothing but this:

“The little devil sleeps.”

Yes, that was all he said and from anyone else I should not have liked to hear my Pierrot called a little devil. Yet from the lips of Monsieur Jack Martin I did not care. It was like a compliment.

Then Monsieur Jack Martin with Pierrot in his strong arms walked from the window to the door and then back again to the window and then to the door again—walking slowly and saying nothing.

I said nothing and watched his face. He was like a giant—tall and broad across the shoulders. His hair was as light as that of my Pierrot and he had a great beard which was almost red. His eyes were blue like the sky over the ocean and he had marvellous white teeth, which you saw when he laughed. But when I knew him first, he did not laugh much. He wore a suit of white flannel, which was loose all over him, and a shirt of white, which was loose, and a cravat of dark blue, which was loose. Everything he wore was loose and this became him. I felt always, when I saw Monsieur Jack Martin, that he was a man who needed much room.

So he walked with my Pierrot for the matter of ten minutes saying nothing, and I did not have the heart to stop him, though Doctor Jambeau told me it was not well to walk with Pierrot. I think he would have walked like that until dark if my courage had not returned. Twice I tried to tell him before the words came from my lips. Then I said, hardly hearing myself:

“Monsieur.”

Monsieur Jack Martin answered nothing. Then I said louder;

“Monsieur.”

Still he said nothing.

Then I rose from my chair and spoke again. I did not like to do this, but I knew it was very necessary.

“Pardon, Monsieur,” I said.



He looked down at me with three deep lines between his eyes.

"Well?" he said in a whisper.

"Pardon, Monsieur," I said, "but Doctor Jambeau has told me it is not well to walk with Pierrot."

"What does Jambeau know about it?" he said.

"I do not know," I said.

"As for the boy—he sleeps, so what does *he* know about it?"

Monsieur Jack Martin put his finger to his lips and said in a whisper:

"We will keep this a secret. We will not tell either of them."

So he began to walk again. I permitted it for another five minutes and then I gained further courage. Once again I approached him.

"Pardon, Monsieur," I said. "But Pierrot must return to his bed now."

"Eh?" he said.

"Truly. He must return to his bed."

I held out my arms for Pierrot, but Monsieur Jack Martin said:

"Where is his bed?"

I pointed to the place in my own bed where Pierrot always slept, and he went there and put him down very gently. When Monsieur Jack Martin removed his arms, Pierrot opened his eyes and then closed them again, squinting them up and turning down the corners of his mouth. Then



he opened that mouth and gave a cry louder than I had ever heard.

"You see," said Monsieur Jack Martin, making as if to take him again. "He would walk some more."

"That is the very reason he must not walk any more," I said.

I put the blankets over Pierrot and patted him a moment, singing to him while Monsieur Jack Martin stood ready to seize my Pierrot if he did not stop his crying.

"It is too bad not to give him what he wishes," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "He is not bigger than a minute."

"He is bigger twice over than the baby of the Countess," I told him.

"Then that Countess must carry her baby about in a locket," he said. "But this Pierrot here—he is very wise. He knows already what he desires."

"But he does not know already what is good for him," I said.

"Nobody ever learns that," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "Never until it is too late."

Pierrot ceased his crying and slept again, but I could not move Monsieur Jack Martin from the side of the bed. He stood there for a long while saying nothing and then, as if awaking from a dream, he said:

"When will you be ready to come?"

"It is very good of you, Monsieur——"

He stopped me there. I shall never forget.

"Do not ever say that to me," he said. "I do nothing because it is good. I do what I damn please."

I have written it just as he spoke it. I am sure he meant no harm with his oath. I have learned through Pierrot many things and one is this: it is possible to know more of a man by his manner towards a little baby than by his manner towards anyone already full-grown. Many people have told lies to me, but in all my life I never knew anyone to tell a lie to Pierrot.

"When will you be ready to come?" he said.

"Within a week."

"Good," he said. "Come sooner if you can. I shall have someone else there to help you."

"To help me?" I said. "But I thought——"

"Do not think," he said. "All you have to do is come."

That was his way. I learned after a long time not to talk so much, but I did not know then. He took his hat after this and went out, and as he opened the door, I thought I heard the rustling of the skirts of Madame. I was sure of this when she came, as soon as the door below closed behind Monsieur Jack Martin. She looked at the bed to see if Pierrot was still there. Then she came and stood before me.

"I have something to say to you," she told me.

"Well," I said, not liking her air, "I am listening."

"It is this; rest here and you need not worry about the rent. Help me with the house and it will not cost you a sou."

I could not understand. This was not like Madame Lacroix, who, it was said, had never in her life given as much as a bowl of soup to a beggar. Such an offer as this from her was like the offer of a fortune from another. It made the tears come to my eyes.

"That is very kind of you," I said.

"It is something not everyone would do," she said with a nod.

"Truly," I said, "and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. But it is necessary for me to take service. I must earn money."

"For what?" she said.

"There is Pierrot. He must have clothes."

"Bah," said Madame. "We shall find clothes enough for him."

"And I must have clothes for myself."

"And for you also."

"Then also I must save for Pierrot."

I tried to make it seem as difficult as possible, though what I said was all true, in the hope that she would take back her offer.

"Pierrot shall not want while he lives here," said Madame.

Now would anyone believe such a thing? But that is what she told me. As for me, it was all I could do not to cry because it was like a miracle.



"What can I say?" I told her, "except that you are too generous."

"There are not many who would do such a thing," she said with a nod. "And what is your answer?"

When one makes an effort to be good and kind, it makes one ashamed to cause that goodness to come to nothing. Yet there was nothing to do but to tell her of what I had promised Monsieur Jack Martin.

"I said that I would come to him next week," I told her.

Then it was another woman who stood before me. I cannot write down all she said to me. It was too terrible. She told me I was a fool and wicked and ungrateful. Then she said things about Monsieur Jack Martin that cannot be repeated. She said that nothing but evil would come of this and told me such things that I covered my ears. And in the end she bade me leave her house.

"I will have none of you," she said. "Not another hour shall you rest under my roof."

She went out, and I rocked back and forth not knowing what to do.

## CHAPTER VII

FOR a long time I could not think, and then I rose and began to gather my things. I packed my baby's clothes in the same trunk which Pierre had bought when we came here, and the memory of those days made me cry again. I did not know where I was going, for I was not yet strong enough to begin work for Monsieur Jack Martin, and I did not wish to go there until then. I had enough money for one night and perhaps two at the hotel, but I did not know if I was able to walk there with Pierrot in my arms. I knew only one thing, that I must leave this house within an hour or Madame Lacroix would do something terrible. It was even possible, I thought, that she might have me and my Pierrot taken to the prison. Then I looked at the bed and I saw my Pierrot sleeping as peacefully as a little angel. That gave me strength.

It was a wonderful thing—this trust of my Pierrot in me. It was like the trust of a good priest in God. It mattered not what trouble was all around him, he had faith that I should find a way out of it for him. It mattered not the danger, my Pierrot felt safe in my arms. I have seen him

in a storm, when all the people stood around thinking the end of the world had come, look up and smile at me as if he thought I had the power to save him even if the whole universe perished. At such moments I have felt as if, in truth, I had such power. Something came into me which made me feel that I could walk for him a thousand miles and never tire; that I could find food for him even by the roadside; that other shelter he did not need but me. With Pierrot hungry in my arms there was nothing either right or wrong I could not do to find him food. With Pierrot in my arms there was no danger I could not face and beat back. Sometimes I feared, feeling like a savage. This was because he trusted and had no strength of his own.

So with my eyes upon Pierrot I began yet again to gather my things. It was then that the door opened softly and Jean came in. I had forgotten about Jean, which was what all the world did about Jean. But now I was very glad to see him. He came across the room on the tip of his toes looking back often over his shoulder. He drew from his pocket a leather bag.

"See," he said, "I have here forty francs. For ten years I have been saving this, sou by sou."

"Well, Jean?" I said, not understanding.

"It is mine," he said. "I heard what Madame said to you and now, by the good God, I go with you."

"With me?" I said.





*Madame Lacroix*



' "We will go away," he said. "We will go down the road as far as we can go, and I will carry Pierrot for you."

"Jean! Jean!" I said, not knowing whether to laugh or to cry. "That is impossible."

"We will go to Nice and beyond that to Cannes and even beyond that. Here is money enough, and when that is gone, I will work. We will go along the road and live in the sunshine. You shall be my daughter and Pierrot, my grandson. That will be fine—eh?"

Now who would have thought this Jean would think of such a thing as that? No one in the village of Beaulieu, I can tell you. They thought he had no dreams at all—this husband of Madame Lacroix. As I said nothing, he said more.

"We will pluck flowers for Pierrot and he shall listen to the songs of birds," he said. "I will carry blankets, and if we find no roof, then I will build a fire and we will sleep beneath the stars. And there will be no one to scold us and no one to strike us."

As he told me this, he looked young again. The colour came to his cheeks, and his eyes, which had always been dull, became bright. For a moment he made me believe this was a possible thing to do.

"Yes," I said, "that would be fine."

"It would make a man of Pierrot," he said. "The sun would brown his cheeks, and the air by the road would bring colour. You shall see how he eats—that Pierrot!"



"As it is, he eats enough," I said with a laugh. It was this laugh that made me see that the plan of Jean was only a dream. One cannot play the gypsy with an infant. And what would all the world say? So I gave my hand to Jean and shook my head.

"I am sorry," I said, "but it is not possible."

"You will not come with me?" he said.

When he said that, half the light went from his eyes.

"Ah, Jean," I said. "You are so good to me and Pierrot. I would go like that with you sooner than I would go with anyone in the world. But Pierrot is so small. If one is born by the side of the road, then it is possible to live by the side of the road. But if one is born in a house, then one must live in a house if that is possible. I fear it would be too cold and damp at night for my Pierrot."

"Then you will not come," he said to himself, and with that all the rest of the light went from his eyes and he was just Jean again—just the husband of Madame Lacroix. It made me ache to see it.

"I do not know yet where I shall go, Jean," I hastened to tell him. "I must find a place, but wherever it is, I wish you to come and see me. Will you promise that?"

"Yes," Jean said.

"And when we are around the corner, you may carry my Pierrot. Would you like that?"

Yes, Madame," he said. "I will wait around the corner for you."

Then he thrust towards me his bag of money—the forty francs he had been ten years in saving.

"For you and Pierrot," he said.

Before I could find my voice he was gone. I sat down on my trunk and looked at that bag. I opened it and brought forth many coins and most of them were one-sou pieces. And I thought that if I were able to return a louis d'or for every sou in that bag, I could never pay Jean for the goodness of his heart. So I pressed a kiss upon the bag and placed it in my trunk to return to him when I was able. As I did this, the door opened and Madame Lacroix entered.

"What are you about?" she said.

"I am preparing to leave," I said.

"Do not be a little fool," she said. "Unpack that trunk and make ready for your lunch."



## CHAPTER VIII

**M**ONSIEUR Jack Martin came again the next day and I was very glad to see him. It was strange, but even at the beginning he made me feel towards him as my Pierrot felt towards me, that with him about no harm could come. This was not because he regarded me more than another but because he was such a big giant. Never have I seen any man who looked so much like a man as Monsieur Jack Martin. All women thought like that of him. In the company that gathered for dinners at the villa where there were men from many countries, he was as strong as any six. Even the men of the village who laughed at the weakness of the aristocrats, as they called them, did not laugh at Monsieur Jack Martin. There was a big man of Villefranche who boasted much of his skill at fighting and boasted most when he had drunk much wine. On one Fête Day he boasted like that as Monsieur Jack Martin passed, and Monsieur Jack Martin heard him. That man boasts no more without first looking over his shoulder to see that Monsieur Jack Martin is not about.

Monsieur Jack Martin brought with him this



afternoon two things which made me laugh. One was a huge stick for Pierrot which he called a baseball bat. He said he wished Pierrot to look at this even if he was not big enough to play with it, so that he would become accustomed to it.

"We will make a ball player of this Pierrot," he said. "He has a good eye."

I do not know what he meant, but that stick was as tall as Pierrot four times over.

The other thing he brought was a letter from Doctor Jambeau.

"You can read?" said Monsieur Jack Martin to me.

"Yes, Monsieur," I said.

"Then read that," he said.

I have preserved that letter and I copy it here as it was written:

"To whom it may concern:

"This is to say that I, Jacques Jambeau, being the physician in charge of an infant commonly known as Pierrot and therefore responsible for his good health, do hereby authorise Monsieur J. R. Martin of the Villa Cornice, situate in the town of Beaulieu, to walk with the aforesaid infant in his arms—providing only that he obtain the consent and authority of the mother of said infant—for a period hereby specified; namely ten minutes daily. It is further understood that this privilege is revocable at the will either of the aforesaid Dr. Jacques Jambeau or the aforesaid

mother or the aforesaid infant. To which on this eighteenth day of April I attach my signature.

“DR. JACQUES JAMBEAU,  
“Attending physician.”

I read this two times, but I was no wiser than before I read it.

“Well,” said Monsieur Jack Martin, “you give your consent?”

“Yes,” I said. “But I do not know what is said there.”

“It means only that for all Jambeau cares, I may walk with the boy for ten minutes every day.”

“Very well,” I said.

“I have a friend who is a lawyer, and he prepared that for me. I could have said the same thing in ten words but it would not have sounded as well.”

So Monsieur Jack Martin sat down and waited for Pierrot to wake and asked me many things about myself. He had a way that made one willing to tell about one's self, and before I was done I told him about my mother and father and where I went to school, and how they both died when I was fourteen, and how then I went to live with a cousin and cooked for her, and then how I met Pierre and about his father and mother, and how I came here and how Pierre died. For an hour I talked only of myself and did not think it strange, because he listened with such interest and if I

stopped, asked me yet another question. Sometimes he smiled and sometimes he nodded his head and sometimes he said:

"Tough luck."

Now I had never spoken of these matters before to anyone in Beaulieu, and yet to him I spoke as if at confession. And though I had nothing to hide, I felt very glad that this was so because one could not have a secret from Monsieur Jack Martin. He might not ask with his lips, but his blue eyes looking at you would make you speak. He learned many secrets from many women as I have reason to know, but I do not believe that any woman was ever sorry for telling him her secret. I have known a very old woman with white hair to tell Monsieur Jack Martin of matters that happened in her youth and lay buried in her heart many years and then cry and be glad after this.

Pierrot slept until twenty minutes before it was time for me to nurse him, and then he awoke and looked about the room. Monsieur Jack Martin was for taking him at once, but it was necessary for me to take him first. While I put fresh clothes upon my Pierrot, Monsieur Jack Martin stood with his watch in his hand, and Pierrot looked at him in a way he had. My Pierrot was like a judge. Every man and every woman he had never seen before was obliged to stand before him. Then my Pierrot would observe him with his big, clear eyes as if reading his heart. He would say



nothing, but observe his hair and his forehead and his eyes and his nose and his mouth and his chin and then, if my Pierrot was satisfied, he would smile, but if he was not satisfied, he would turn down the corners of his mouth and shut his eyes and cry. He would not cry in fear, you understand, but in this way he would show that he did not like that man or that woman. This led to many things that no one understood. Pierrot laughed when he saw for the first time Gaston Battaille, who was called a thief and a very bad man, and he cried when he saw for the first time the noble Russian who was a judge in his own country. And my Pierrot never forgot. If he saw a man twenty times, it was always the same. The first time in his life that my Pierrot ever laughed aloud it was for Monsieur Jack Martin.

When I had finished, I gave my Pierrot to him and he placed his watch upon the table.

"You cannot count until he is in my arms," he said. "It is now seventeen minutes of three."

Then he began his walk to the door and back again to the window and then to the door, saying nothing, with his eyes far away. I wondered of what he thought and why it was that at such times he was so sad. Now though my Pierrot was awake and hungry he said nothing either, but allowed himself to be carried like this. I think the arms of Monsieur Jack Martin were so strong that my Pierrot felt their strength.

I also felt their strength and was very happy and

very proud. I thought of how Pierrot had not been with me yet a month but how in that time he had made over the whole world for me. There were only a few weeks since I was alone and without friends in a strange village and did not know what I should do to live and did not care. Now because of Pierrot I was no longer alone and could never be alone again if I had only him for company.

But Pierrot had made for me many other friends who, until he came, regarded me no more than a stone by the sea-shore. As for this being now a strange village, it was as if I myself had been born here because Pierrot had been born here. Also through Pierrot I had found work to do, so I wished to live as never I had wished to live before. My Pierrot, not a month old, was to me like a father and a husband and a son all in one.

Thinking of these things, my arms trembled to have my Pierrot back in them and I looked at the watch of Monsieur Jack Martin. He saw me do this and came over and looked also. Then he said:

"That watch goes too fast."

But Monsieur Jack Martin was honest in all things. If he made a promise even with himself, he never forgot. It was said that a promise from him was better than a paper from a justice. So precisely to the minute he brought Pierrot to me and placed him in my arms. Once again my Pierrot cried, even when coming to me, and I

think this gave great pleasure to Monsieur Jack Martin.

This same afternoon Lucille Corbeau came to see me and she said that Jean had stood for many hours around the corner and would not tell her for what he waited. I, like all the world, had forgotten Jean even when he had been so good to me. I sent her out at once to tell him that I would not go to-day, and bade her tell him also that both myself and Pierrot sent our love. When she came back, she said that Jean said nothing and looked very sad.

"Poor Jean," I said to Lucille. "There is a fine man there."

"Jean—a fine man?" said Lucille with a laugh.

"Do not ever laugh again at Jean," I said to her.

Then I told her just what happened and what Jean did and showed her the bag of money in my trunk. And Lucille cried and prayed God to forgive her for laughing at Jean.



## CHAPTER IX

ON the next day I learned of a terrible thing which was that during the night the little baby of the Countess had died. Oh, it was too horrible! It makes me cold when I think of it. It was Madame Lacroix who told me. She came up in the morning with my rolls and chocolate and said to me:

"Have you heard?"

"I have heard nothing," I said.

"The baby of the Countess is dead," said Madame.

I remember how all the blood went from my head and all the strength from my knees.

"That is not possible," I said.

"Perhaps not," said Madame, "but it is true. Antonin, the postman, told me."

"Dead? But how can a little baby die when he has just begun to live?" I said.

Madame shrugged her shoulders.

"That is what comes of not knowing how to care for an infant," she said.

I seized my Pierrot, who was sleeping. I held him tight in my arms and sat down in a chair. It did not seem to me possible that ever again could

I permit Pierrot to leave my arms. I hugged him to my breast until he cried out. I kissed his warm hair and his eyes and held his warm feet in my hand. I kept my lips upon his temple where I could feel the beat of his heart.

"Do not be a little fool," said Madame. "Eat your breakfast."

"I can eat nothing," I said. "Please take it away. Please go."

I wished to be alone with Pierrot. At that moment I wished to share him with no one because there was not enough of him even for me.

"Bah," said Madame. "Perhaps this will teach you to leave your infant with those who know."

"I will leave him with no one," I told her. "After this he must sleep always in my arms."

So Madame went out, and I rocked my Pierrot with my lips on his temple. I had heard before of babies who died, but it had meant little to me. But now I became first hot and then cold. My lips were dry, and I started at a noise upon the street. I feared I do not know what—as if some terrible murderer were running wild about the village. I remember that once I rose and placed a chair against the door. I tried to sing to Pierrot and could not. I ached to have him open his eyes so that I could look into them. My throat was as if some one had choked me.

It does not seem right that ever a baby should die. They are pure and so sinless and so trusting. It must be that when they die, God is not looking.

After a little I was able to think of the Countess and how dark the world must be to her. I thought it must always be night to her after this, and that the sun would never rise again for her or the birds sing again for her. Always she must live in the night. But in the night she would wake and reach for her baby and not find him. So it was not possible for her to live at all. I did not see how that was possible. I did not see why she did not die when her baby died.

It was not until Pierrot awoke and searched for my breast with his little nose that I recovered from my fear. Then, with him suckling there, the shadow lifted a little from the world. His hand rested upon my neck and sometimes he opened his eyes and looked at me. Oh, my Pierrot was alive and what else could I think of? But I held him and would not permit him to go even for his bath until Doctor Jambeau came in. He entered with a great scowl between his eyes. His voice was angry. I think he must have read my eyes for he said:

"Some fool has told you?"

"Yes," I said. "And is it true?"

"Yes," he said. "In the name of God why do not such mothers come to us as soon as they are out of school? It is then they should prepare for their babies."

I did not understand and so said nothing.

"They come to us when it is time for their



babies to be born and bid us undo their whole lives. It is not possible—that."

He said a great deal more and I listened. Then he took my Pierrot.

"And the Countess?" I said.

"Pitiful, pitiful," he said. "The heart of a mother and the body of a grandmother."

"I am very sorry for her," I said.

"So am I," he said, "but that does her no good."

"Would it be possible for me to write her a little note?"

"Eh?"

"You think it would do no good?"

He looked up at me a moment. Then he said:

"Try it. You may be the only one in the world who can help her."

So he gave to me a pencil and a piece of paper and I wrote this:

"DEAR MADAME:

"My heart bleeds for you and I am praying for you. I know how empty you are and if it would help, you may hold my Pierrot. In the day or in the night you may come and hold my Pierrot."

I gave it to Doctor Jambeau and he read it.

"I do not know very well what to say," I told him.

"Your heart has told you. That is enough," he said.

"I thought if she could hold a baby—any baby——"

"I do not know about that," he said.

"I do not know either," I said. "But if she wishes, she may come when she wishes."

The next day I received from the Countess a letter expressing her thanks. But it was four days later, after dark, that Madame Lacroix came in and said to me:

"A woman below wished to see you, but I told her you could see no one."

I do not understand what made me know but I knew that this woman must be the Countess. I ran out of the door and down the stairs and into the street. In the dark I could not see, but Jean was there and he ran for me in the direction he had seen the woman go. In a minute he came back with her. She was in black and covered with a veil so that it was not possible to see her face. It made me shake so that I could not speak.

"I did not wish to trouble you," she said.

I do not think I said anything, but she followed me into the house and to my room. Madame Lacroix was there, but she left when we entered. Then I closed the door and did not light the candle. Madame, the Countess, began to weep, and I went to the bed and took Pierrot and placed him in her arms. He did not wake, and she seated herself in a chair and began to rock him back and forth. As for me, I seated myself on the floor at her feet

and placed my hands over my face and prayed.

Madame, the Countess, did not weep any more but every little while I heard in the dark a moan like the wind at night. That went to my heart like the thrust of a knife. Once I reached my hand for her hand, and she held it so hard that it hurt, but I did not care.

So we sat for the matter of an hour, and I think Madame, the Countess, found rest.



## CHAPTER X

IT was on April the twenty-fifth that I left the house of Madame Lacroix to take service with Monsieur Jack Martin. I rose early that morning and opened my window and saw that the sky was blue and the ocean bluer than the sky. I heard the birds sing and I looked at the sun shining upon the trees and the houses and the water and was very glad. I was not even sad because of Pierre, for I thought he must be glad too that Pierrot, his son, was living in such a beautiful world. When I watched the little waves creeping over the rocks towards me, I laughed and said they were trying to come near enough to play with Pierrot, who slept upon the bed. In those days my Pierrot was sleeping when he was not eating and eating when he was not sleeping, but even when he slept, he was to me awake. When I looked at the blue sky, it was as if he stood by my side also looking, and when I laughed at the waves, it was as if he laughed also. As long as he himself could not see or speak, his soul was still part of my soul though his body was separate from mine. That is why I was not lonely when he slept, for it was only his body which slept. The soul of Pierrot never slept except

when I slept. I do not know if I make myself understood or if I will be thought foolish, but I put down everything just as I felt.

I do not know why it was that Pierrot and I were so happy this morning. Perhaps it was because we were going out into the world together for the first time. Here in this room where Pierrot was born, it was as if we were in a world by ourselves. It had its beginning here and no one but Pierrot and I had any part in it. Others came in and went out, in the end leaving us once more alone together. That was very pleasant and I thought nothing could be better. But now as we were about to go, I thought that being together outside would make us even closer comrades than before.

So I opened the window wide and permitted the sunshine and the salt air from the sea to enter, and breathed deep of it. As I made my toilet, I sang to myself this morning. I felt strong, and though my Pierrot was making plenty of work for me, I was glad I was soon to have other work also. I do not understand why it is that women, even if they are rich and even if they are noble, care to do nothing at all. At the beginning, when I did not have strength, it was pleasant enough, but after this it made me ashamed to lie in bed and see Madame serve me. I had heard in Paris of a girl who was not noble at all, and whose riches brought her only shame, who did like this, so that it is not the grand ladies alone who live lazily.

I had not told Madame that I was to leave this





*I looked at the sun shining upon the trees and the houses  
and the water*





day. I did not wish to give her much time in which to talk. But I had told Jean, and he was to carry my trunk for me. I gave Pierrot his bath early and put upon him the dress given to him by the Countess. He was very good and very sweet, and I found on the back of his neck a curl. There was just one and it was beautiful. I was glad because I had hoped his hair might curl a little. After this I gave him his breakfast and then put him in his bed to sleep for the last time there. I had not put into my trunk all my things, but when Madame came up with bread and chocolate for me, she saw that something was in preparation. She looked about the room and into the trunk and then at Pierrot in his dress which he never wore until afternoon.

"Well?" she said.

"To-day I begin service with Monsieur Jack Martin," I told her, trying to make it seem as small an affair as possible.

Her face turned red and she placed her hands upon her hips.

"You little fool," she said. "I thought something like that was in your head."

"I don't see why I am to be called a little fool because it is necessary for me to work," I said.

"Did I not say you could remain here?" she said.

"Yes, Madame," I said. "But already I had given my promise to Monsieur."

"You had better have a care what promises you

make to that American," she said. "Has not Pierrot had here the best of care?"

"Yes, Madame."

"Has he not grown fat and strong?"

"Yes, Madame."

"And the infant of the Countess on the contrary——"

"Oh!" I said. "Please do not talk of that."

"If that infant had been with me, it would be alive to-day."

"But Doctor Jambeau said——"

"I do not care what Doctor Jambeau says. I tell you things as they are, and the proof is that things are as they are."

I said nothing then and Madame lost much of her anger. She went to the bed and looked at Pierrot and then she came back to me, her face looking older and her shoulders bent.

"Remain with me," she said in a voice which was like that when she sang, "La, la, la," to Pierrot. "Remain with me. You shall have everything like a daughter. I am growing old. I shall not be here long to scold, and when I go Pierrot shall have all. I will make a testament."

None in all Beaulieu had ever heard Madame talk like this. I was not able to reply.

"He has crept into my heart—that Pierrot," said Madame. "He was born here in my house, and no other child was ever born here. I have bathed him and dressed him. Do not take him away."



Now a moment before I would not have thought it possible, but I rose and went to Madame Lacroix and kissed her upon the cheek. Her cheek was hot and wrinkled, and she bent her head lower when I did that.

"You have been very good to my Pierrot," I said. "You have been like a Godmother to him."

"No other was ever born here," she said.

"I will never forget what you have done, and when Pierrot is old enough, I will tell him and he will come here and play with you. Until then you must come often and play with him."

"Let him remain. Pierrot shall have all," she said.

"There, there," I said. "He is not going far. It is only down the road a little way."

Then quickly she straightened herself again with anger in her eyes, and I do not know what she would have said if at this moment Monsieur Jack Martin had not come to the door.

"Ready?" he said like a military captain giving an order.

I did not know he was coming for me.

"The machine is waiting," he said. "Throw your things into the trunk and I will carry it down."

While I hurried as fast as I could, he picked up one thing and then another as he found it—Pierrot's clothes and my clothes and many things which were not mine at all—and each time he said:

"This yours?"

If I said "yes," he threw it into the trunk, and if I said "no," he threw it across the room. I have never seen such a man. If he had gone out, I would have been ready in half the time. Madame Lacroix watched with a terrible face. When at last all things were in the trunk, he closed it with a great noise and lifted it to his shoulder as easily as if it were a handbag and went down the stairs with it.

"*Sacré!*" said Madame Lacroix. "He is a devil—that man!"

Then she went to the bed and seized Pierrot in her arms.

"But he shall not take Pierrot," she said. "In the name of God do not permit him to take Pierrot."

She began to walk with my Pierrot saying, "La, la, la," sometimes in tears and sometimes as if she spoke an oath. I had fear as to what she would do when Monsieur Jack Martin returned. But when he came into the room, he took Pierrot and she said nothing, and I had time only to put a shawl about my baby before he was going down the stairs. I followed at once and Madame followed me. At the door I turned and said to her:

"You will come and play with Pierrot?"

"Go," she said. "But have a care of that devil."

Then Monsieur Jack Martin commanded me to

step into the automobile and he held Pierrot in his arms. So we went through the village to the Villa Cornice, which was the first time my Pierrot ever rode in an automobile, and the first time also that I myself ever rode in an automobile.





## CHAPTER XI

WE went very fast—so fast I held my breath. It did not seem to me one minute before we reached the Villa and I was glad it was no longer. I thought it would make Pierrot cry but he did not cry, and Monsieur Jack Martin laughed at me and gave praise to Pierrot. When Monsieur Jack Martin stepped out, he said to the man he called Jimmee, who was the engineer:

“It is necessary to let her out more than that to frighten this sport, Jimmee.”

Monsieur Jack Martin spoke very well in French, but he used many words which I had never heard before. At the beginning they were strange and I did not always know their meaning, but after a little I came to know them. “To let her out,” that is to say to go as fast as possible. And “sport,” that is a word to express a fine man who is not afraid.

This Jimmee touched his hat when he heard that and smiled.

Monsieur Jack Martin carried Pierrot into the villa and showed me the room he had prepared. It was under the roof, but it faced the south and contained two windows.

"Plenty of air and sunlight is what makes them grow," he said to me.

Now I had never seen anything so beautiful as this room. It was as white and fresh as the chamber of a nun. In it there was a big bed painted white and all the other things were white and as though newly bought. The walls were the blue of the sky and there were many beautiful pictures upon them. These pictures were of the sunlight in the olive trees and of the sunlight on the sea and of the sunlight on the road, and so well painted that to look at them was like looking from a window. I had never seen anything so beautiful and did not know at this time that it was Monsieur Jack Martin who painted them. The bed was covered with fine linen and in a corner there was a little tin tub for Pierrot.

"If there is anything more you wish, ask for it," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

He went out and left me there with Pierrot. I sat upon the bed and tried to think where I was. It was so strange that I should be in this room with my Pierrot when only two months before I was alone and not knowing if on the next day I should have even a bed of hay. It was like the fable of Cinderella, for if, in truth, I had been a real princess, I could ask for no more than I had here. I looked from the windows into a beautiful garden, and though I could not watch the sea, I could watch the flowers. Often the sound of the wind through the palms, of which there were many,

sounded like the waves crawling over the rocks. For the rest of the time it was very quiet as if all the world were praying. I knelt by the bed and thanked the good God for all he had brought to me.

Then I drew back the fine linen, which was as white as the clouds or the foam of the sea, and placed my Pierrot there in the middle of that big bed. I was very glad for my Pierrot to have such beautiful linen upon which to sleep. His skin was very tender and it was fitting for him. But as for me myself I hardly dared to move about. And I felt also that to repay Monsieur Jack Martin for his goodness I must begin to work at once. So I dressed myself in a new white apron which I had made and went down to the kitchen, leaving the door open so that I could hear Pierrot if he awoke.

I did not know what to do because it was still too early to make preparations for lunch and everything about the kitchen was as new and clean as about my room. Nevertheless, it was necessary for me to do something to make me feel at ease, so I took all the kettles and placed them in the sink and began to scour them. I had finished no more than two kettles when Monsieur Jack Martin came to the door.

"For the love of Moses what are you about?" he said.

That was an oath he used much and it is to me much better than "the love of God," which many people use.



"I am cleaning the kettles, Monsieur," I told him, although I thought it was possible for him to see what I was doing.

"Where is the boy?" he demanded.

"He sleeps on the bed."

Monsieur Jack Martin left me then and I heard him run up the stairs and I feared and ran after him. He looked in and then he commanded me to come down again with him. At the foot of the stairs he said to me:

"Do you not know that boy might fall from the bed and break his neck?"

"He cannot yet walk," I told him.

"But he can roll, can he not?" he said.

"No, Monsieur," I said, "not yet."

"Well, you can never tell when he will learn. He might awake in a minute and find he was able to do that. They keep secret what they can do until they do it—these little boys."

"But Pierrot is not yet two months old," I told him.

"That is very well," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"But for two months now he has been thinking—planning. It would not surprise me to see him try to come down those stairs at any time."

I looked up the stairs to see if Pierrot was coming. Then I could not help but smile at myself.

"Now listen," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"The first duty of a mother is to watch her child. While Pierrot is in my house, I desire you to keep your eyes upon him."

"But, Monsieur——"

"Do you intend to do what I command you or not?"

"Yes, Monsieur," I said.

"Then do not ever leave that boy alone upon the bed."

"But the work——"

"That is not for you to worry about until I do," he said.

I did not know what to say for a moment. There were many things he understood, but there were many things also which it was difficult to make him understand.

"You have been very good to me," I said. "And thirty francs is too much for me to take. But if I have not work to do here, I cannot remain."

"Eh?" he said. "Is not this my house?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

"Then what the devil are you talking about?"

"Only that if I do nothing, I cannot remain," I said.

"Why not?"

"Because that would be impossible," I said.

"But if I ask you to remain and pay you to remain, what affair is it of yours?" he said.

Now what could one do with such a man?

"It would make me very unhappy," I said.

I tried not to let him see that I was upon the point of crying and turned my head away, but I think he saw, for he said quickly:

“Do as you please then. Scrub all those kettles, and when you are finished, I will buy some more for you to scrub.”

So I went back into the kitchen and worked as hard as I could for the matter of an hour, stopping only to go to the foot of the stairs and listen for Pierrot. I did not see Monsieur Jack Martin again, and I feared I had made him angry. When I had made clean everything in the kitchen, I went upstairs, and then what do you think I found? Monsieur Jack Martin was in a chair near the door, smoking a big pipe and watching my Pierrot.

“It was not necessary for you to do this,” I said.

“Not if you had a little sense,” he said.

“But I listened at the foot of the stairs.”

“Were you curious to hear what sort of a noise he made when he fell out?” he said.

He made me laugh when he said that, and I did not wish to laugh.

“He has not moved,” I said.

“That is true,” he said. “But in order to prove that it has been necessary for me to sit here one hour. But I hope you have enjoyed yourself with the kettles.”

“I shall not leave him again upon the bed,” I told him.

“I would not leave a puppy of that age alone,” he said. “It is not right because, when these little things go to sleep like that, they trust us big things to watch over them. And when anyone trusts me



—big or little,—I do not give him cause to regret that trust.”

It was so he spoke with three lines between his eyes. It was very strange to me that he was so serious about this, but soon I learned that Monsieur Jack Martin was a man who often was more serious about little affairs than about big affairs. After this, when I had work to do in the kitchen, I made a bed for my Pierrot in a big basket and permitted him to sleep in the next room.



## CHAPTER XII

PIERROT was very happy here in the Villa of Monsieur Jack Martin. I do not know if it is as Monsieur Jack Martin said that in the world from which Pierrot came he was a prince, but it is certain that he liked beautiful things about him. In that bed of fine linen he slept better than he did in the bed of Madame Lacroix. I know because often I myself did not wake except the one time it was necessary to feed him, and then not again until the birds sang. Before this I often woke three and four times, not sleeping again for an hour, thinking of many horrible things. But here there was nothing either for Pierrot or for me to think about except that which brought rest.

Then, also, I found that Pierrot liked the perfume of the roses better than the salt of the sea. It was clear when at once his cheeks began to grow as red as the roses themselves. All night long the perfume came in at the open windows for Pierrot to breathe.

Also Pierrot gained in weight. On the day he was three months old he weighed twelve pounds and a half pound over. Doctor Jambeau and Monsieur Jack Martin were present when he was

weighed, and can tell as to this. This was without any clothes upon him. And this was not just fat. Monsieur Jack Martin felt of his legs and his arms and said:

"He is getting firm. He is going to have muscle."

Until I knew Monsieur Jack Martin, I had not thought that it was well for a man to have muscle if only he had good health, but now I thought I would like my Pierrot to be big and strong like him. A weak man is at the mercy of other men, but a man who has such power as Monsieur Jack Martin had is like a general. Yet I saw that it was seldom necessary for Monsieur Jack Martin to use that strength. It was enough that he had it. He was as gentle as Pierrot, but all men and especially all women thought better of him because they knew he could extend his right arm, as I have seen him do, and permit a man to swing upon it.

My Pierrot began to move his arms and legs about as though taking exercise and this pleased Monsieur Jack Martin.

"What he needs is dumb-bells," said Monsieur Jack Martin one day as he watched him. "I will buy him some as soon as he is old enough to grasp them."

But even now my Pierrot was able to grasp the thumb of Monsieur Jack Martin. In the morning after Pierrot had his breakfast and his nap and was dressed, I would bring him downstairs and place him in the basket. Then Monsieur Jack Martin would come in and extend his two thumbs,



and Pierrot would seize them and hold on until almost lifted from the pillow. I saw that when Pierrot was not yet four months old. At that time Monsieur Jack Martin said:

“He must go to Yale—that boy. They will need him there.”

I had never heard of that country and I asked him where it was.

“It is the biggest country in America,” he said. “It is where all the strong men go.”

I remembered what Madame Lacroix had told me and I did not like this talk, not understanding at that time.

It must not be thought I did nothing about this Villa except to care for Pierrot. Monsieur Jack Martin would not permit me to scrub the floors or wash the windows, but there were many other matters. For example, Monsieur Jack Martin did not live as other men live. He rose as soon as it was light, instead of sleeping late, and at once went upon a long walk. When he returned, he must have his breakfast and I have never seen such a breakfast as he wished. He ate first fruit—as many as three oranges. After this he must have beefsteak and potatoes—almost a full dinner. With this he drank coffee and ate much toasted bread. If he desired eggs, he desired three eggs fried, and with it many slices of bacon, which was sent to him from America. Then he gave me a book telling how to make many American dishes, and out of this I learned how to make what are

called biscuits of cream of tartar, and of these he ate four or five at breakfast while they were hot. Also I tried to make what are called doughnuts, but it was long before I had success with these. They are cakes which are fried, and he liked these also for breakfast.

After this he smoked a big pipe and played with Pierrot for perhaps an hour. Then when it was time for Pierrot to have his bath and his nap, Monsieur Jack Martin took his paints and went out. He did not care for lunch and often did not return until the middle of the afternoon.

When Monsieur Jack Martin did not have guests, dinner was at six, after the American fashion. While I was preparing to serve this, he played with Pierrot again. For this dinner Monsieur Jack Martin again desired much—a roast of beef or lamb or perhaps a chicken. For soups he did not care. But he liked cakes of all kinds—especially those of chocolate. And he liked those with beaten cream upon them. Also he liked what are called pies, and I learned to make those also.

When Monsieur Jack Martin was alone at dinner it gave him pleasure to have me bring the basket containing Pierrot into the room. While he dined, the two would watch each other. Sometimes Monsieur Jack Martin would laugh aloud and sometimes Pierrot would smile. It was as if they told droll stories to each other which I could not hear. If Monsieur Jack Martin saw that my eyes looked curious, he said:

"This is between Pierrot and me."

Sometimes, to frighten me he called me from the kitchen:

"Here, Little Mother," for that is what he called me, "the boy wishes to know if he may have a portion of this beef."

If I came running into the room, as often I did, he said without laughing, holding some upon his fork:

"Just this much?"

"But no," I said. "Doctor Jambeau says he is to have nothing."

"As you wish," he said. "But it is the roast beef that makes them strong."

Another time he desired to give him pie, saying:

"He will not be a man until he has learned to eat pie."

It is necessary to understand that this was only a jest. If at first I did not know this, it was because it was very difficult to know when Monsieur Jack Martin was having his joke and when he was serious. It was not possible to be sure by his laughing, for often he laughed over matters that were very serious and did not laugh at all when he was playing. That was not like Pierrot.

But it is true that Monsieur Jack Martin understood my Pierrot better than anyone—better sometimes than I myself. Perhaps this was because they were two men together. Pierrot laughed with him before he laughed with anyone else. And if Pierrot cried, it was only necessary



for Monsieur Jack Martin to take him in his arms and he ceased. At such times Monsieur Jack Martin talked to him as one man to another. In his seventeenth week Pierrot fell back in his basket and hurt his little head when Monsieur Jack Martin was at play with him, and Monsieur Jack Martin lifted him as he cried and said this:

“Steady, old sport. We must learn to endure such knocks—we men. Just say to yourself, ‘That was a man from Harvard who tackled me,’ and laugh in his face. It is so we do at Yale.”

He lifted him high in the air and that was the first time Pierrot laughed aloud. He was in his fifth month when Pierrot did that. I was there and I heard. I shall never forget, for it was as if at that moment my Pierrot became a man. So it was, when he did anything for the first time, but now it was different. All these weeks my Pierrot had looked about him and said nothing. Even when he smiled, it was as if to himself and not at anyone. What he thought, he thought all alone, and if he was amused, it was at his own thoughts. But when he laughed aloud, it was to share the jest with others. It was as if he had studied the matter all these weeks and decided at last to make friends.

When I heard, I stood where I was, not able to move. As for Monsieur Jack Martin, he placed Pierrot upon his lap and then looked at me.

“Did you hear that?” he said.

"Yes, yes. He laughed! Did he not laugh?"

"I would take an oath he laughed."

"But that was wonderful!"

"You listen to me," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"That Pierrot will talk before he is one year old."

## CHAPTER XIII

WHEN I finished my work in the afternoon, I liked to walk with Pierrot in the garden. There were many roses and palms here, and in one corner a piece of land with which Monsieur Jack Martin amused himself. He called this corner "New England," which is a country in America. Here he planted seeds sent to him from his home—strange plants called sunflowers and corn and squashes and many other things. Most of them were alike because they did not grow very well, but he said it gave him comfort to put the seeds in the ground. He said he thought those seeds did not grow because they were homesick.

Pierrot liked very much to walk in this garden. He watched the flowers and the birds and was very happy. You would not believe how much he saw. It was here Lucille and Jean and Madame Lacroix came to see my Pierrot while Monsieur Jack Martin was out upon the road painting pictures. One day when I walked there, I heard a voice calling Pierrot and then over the top of the wall I saw the head of Madame Lacroix.

"Is that devil about?" she said.





*I liked to walk with Pierrot in the garden*



"Monsieur Jack Martin is not here if that is whom you mean," I said.

Then she came in at the gate and stood at my side, looking hard at Pierrot. Pierrot looked at her, but he did not know her.

"Does he not look well, my Pierrot?" I said.

"He is thin," said Madame Lacroix.

"But he has gained a pound," I said.

"I care not how much he has gained; he is thin. And he lacks colour."

I looked at Pierrot and his cheeks were as red as roses.

"He needs the air of the sea," she said.

"You see those cheeks and tell me he lacks colour?"

"Have I not eyes in my head?" she said to me.

"See how sad the poor infant looks."

She took him from my arms and I thought Pierrot would cry, but he did not cry. There was no baby in all France so brave as my Pierrot. She began to walk with him singing her "La, la, la," and as I heard, I thought I was back again in her home. It was then I felt as at the first how good the good God had been to my Pierrot. Here he was in this beautiful garden, living like a prince and Madame Lacroix coming to see him as if she were one of his servants. Though I do not like to be proud and though I remembered then and always shall remember how kind Madame Lacroix was to my Pierrot, it gave me pleasure to have affairs like this. My Pierrot was like Monsieur



Jack Martin, who was able to walk either with those of noble blood, or with a beggar of the streets, but who, as everyone understood, was himself one with those of noble blood. I do not wish anyone to think my Pierrot was proud, for that is not true. With Lucille Corbeau he was as if he were her son, but with Madame Lacroix, though he suffered himself to be carried, he had an air of I do not know what. To see him with Madame, no one would have thought he was her son.

After Madame had walked the length of the garden with Pierrot almost twenty times, she said to me:

“Madame, the Countess, came yesterday to see this boy.”

“Oh! Did you tell her where I was?”

“I suppose that makes you very proud, eh?”

Now this did not make me so proud as having Madame Lacroix come here to see my Pierrot, but I did not tell her that. It was always difficult for me to remember that Madame, the Countess, was a countess.

“Did you tell her where I had gone?” I said again.

“I told her that this devil of an American had taken you away.”

“You should not have said that. I will write to her.”

“Bah!” said Madame. “Now if you had gone with her, you would have shown some sense.”

“But she did not wish me to go.”



*In the garden of the Villa Cornice*





"No? You had better talk with her."

"If she wishes to see my Pierrot, I will talk with her," I said.

"Then do not forget."

I do not know why it was, but it was the way she said this which made me glad when Madame went. She was in one of her bad moods that day and yet at the gate she turned and said:

"Have you not had enough of this?"

"I am very happy here," I said.

"That room is empty," she said.

"I hope you will soon find someone to occupy it," I said.

"I shall keep that room for Pierrot," she said.

"He will not remain here long. You will see."

She left me feeling so uneasy that when a moment later Lucille, who had been watching over the wall for her to go, came to my side, I was very glad. As Lucille came up the path, I thought she walked better than I had ever seen her. I was sitting upon a stone, and Lucille without speaking came to the side of Pierrot and knelt upon the ground and kissed his fingers. When she looked up at me, I have never seen such a look as there was upon her face. It was like the face of a saint. It drove from my head all thought of Madame Lacroix. I do not know how it was, but I felt a new kind of pride—a pride that was almost holy. Then Lucille said to me in a voice that was like a prayer:

"Dear mother of Pierrot—my back is becoming well."

"Then it is true you walked more easily coming up the path?"

"You saw?" she said.

"And could not believe my eyes."

"It is true. I have prayed to Pierrot, and Pierrot has told God."

I sat very quiet, saying nothing. Lucille still knelt upon the ground, and she put her face in my lap. At that moment Pierrot smiled and made as though to place his hand upon Lucille's head.

"It is marvellous," I said.

"I knew. I knew," said Lucille.

I did not know if it was right even to speak of such a thing as this. It was like a secret between Pierrot and God. I said to Lucille:

"It is better to say nothing to anyone of this miracle. Let us wait."

"But I may come here every day?"

"Every day," I said.

## CHAPTER XIV

ALL the world loved my Pierrot. It mattered not who came to the Villa Cornice, whether it was the boy with vegetables or a friend to visit Monsieur Jack Martin, if they saw my Pierrot they stopped to talk with him. All of them said he was the most wonderful boy they had ever seen. After they went, sometimes I took Pierrot in my lap and tried to see how it was he differed from other children. It was true that he was very beautiful and became more beautiful every day. There were many curls now in his hair, and he smiled and laughed all the time he was awake. Also he was fat and had a beautiful colour. Also his eyes were beautiful. As yet he had no teeth, and though an old man without teeth is not beautiful, my Pierrot was beautiful without them. Pierrot could not speak a word, but he had an air that made everyone think he was able to speak if he wished but that he did not desire it.

There was Antonin, the postman. He came twice every day with letters for Monsieur Jack Martin, and always he stopped to play with Pierrot. He was a man with many children of his



own and so he knew a baby when he saw one. But always, from the first time, he said Pierrot was as fine a baby as he had ever seen.

"He has a name—that boy," he told me. "I hear much of him in the village."

One day when he was playing with Pierrot, Monsieur Jack Martin came in.

"Any mail for Pierrot?" Monsieur Jack Martin said.

Then Antonin looked through his letters and shook his head.

"Nothing this morning, Monsieur," he said.

"Well, in another month the ladies will be writing to him," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

Monsieur Jack Martin threw into the basket an envelope from one of his letters, and Pierrot reached out as if to take it. Then both men watched him. Pierrot moved his fingers towards it and touched it and then looked up and laughed. Both Monsieur Jack Martin and Antonin and I myself laughed to see him laugh, and Pierrot laughed still more. Once again he moved his fingers towards the envelope and tried to grasp it. He had not yet learned how to seize things and was not able to tell whether they were near or far. Sometimes, when he tried to close over it, he seized the blanket and sometimes the basket, and each time he looked up at us and laughed. When Pierrot laughed, everyone who saw him laughed also. It was not possible to do anything else. Once Monsieur Jack Martin said to a

famous Englishman who acted upon the stage and who was visiting him:

"If you could laugh like that boy Pierrot, you would have the whole world laughing with you."

"I know," said that man. "What is it?"

"Just friendliness," said Monsieur Jack Martin to him. "It comes from within—that laugh."

I remembered this and when after this I tried to look on the outside and understand something which my Pierrot did that was marvellous and could not, I said to myself, "That also is from within."

It was the same way when Pierrot cried with pain, as sometimes he did, with his teeth. He did not cry loud and no one was angry with him, as often strangers are with children who cry, but listened to him with tears in their eyes.

So now three of us stood about that basket and laughed when Pierrot laughed. He tried a dozen times to seize that envelope, and Monsieur Jack Martin said to him:

"Do not give up. You have the Yale spirit all right."

And when at the end Pierrot placed his fingers upon the envelope and raised it a little way, Monsieur Jack Martin gave a strange shout, which ended with pronouncing as loud as he could the word "Yale" three times.

It was the next day that, when Antonin came, he drew from his bag many letters for Monsieur Jack Martin, and after placing them upon the

table, drew out another. He looked long at this and then read:

"For Pierrot."

I could not believe, but when he gave the letter to me, I myself read the words:

"To Pierrot."

When I opened it, I was more surprised than before. I copy the letter as it read:

"Beaulieu, France,

"August 3.

"MY DEAR PIERROT:

"As I was passing the Villa Cornice, I saw you over the wall, but you did not see me. I am writing this to extend to your mother my congratulations and to tell her that I have never seen in all my life so fine a boy as you. With best wishes for a long and happy life, I beg to remain, my dear Pierrot,

"Your sincere admirer,

"DUCHESS MAGDALEN DE ROCHECHAMBEAU."

Now that was very strange, was it not? Because of the beating of my heart I did not hear Monsieur Jack Martin when he entered.

"What is the trouble?" he said to me.

I gave the letter to him and he read it.

"*Hélas!*" he said. "I do not like this. The Duchess is a married lady."

"But Pierrot is only a little boy," I said to him.



"Just so, but he *is* a boy, do not forget that. Some day he is going to be a man. You cannot tell how far this affair may go."

Of course I saw later this was only his jest. I knew that Antonin was also curious and so I showed the letter to him.

"To think of that!" he said. "And she saw him only over the wall."

"It will be necessary to add three feet to the top of that wall," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"I do not understand how it was possible for her to see him," I said.

"Those ladies—those noble ladies, they can see far. Eh, Antonin?"

"Yes, Monsieur," said Antonin.

"Is it necessary for me to reply?" I said.

"This is Pierrot's affair—not yours," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "If I were in his place, I would give no attention to it."

They talked much more about it, these two, until my head was in confusion, and I almost believed that Pierrot had grown to be a man. When thinking of it in that fashion, I did not like it. I saw how it must be with mothers when their sons begin to receive letters from other women. I understand now that I was very foolish, but I try to remember how I felt when these things happened.

The next week, when I had almost forgotten about this, Antonin brought yet another letter to Pierrot. I copy this one also.

“Beaulieu, France,  
“August 10.

“MY DEAR PIERROT:

“I trust you will not think I am taking a great liberty in writing to you. In passing the garden gate I saw you in the arms of your mother and I have been enraptured ever since. What a beautiful boy you are and what a wonderful man you will make! I am from England and think it is a great pity you were not born an Englishman. But I do not suppose you are at fault. I love you, Pierrot, and send you my blessing. From your heart-broken friend,

“LADY ANGELA BUCKINGHAM.”

I would not have given that letter to Monsieur Jack Martin if he had not come in while I was reading it. He said:

“Another?”

When he read it, he gave a whistle.

“I never heard of anything like this in my life,” he said.

“These ladies are very nice,” I said. “But I wish they would not write like that.”

“My dear Little Mother,” said Monsieur Jack Martin, “you cannot prevent it. I do not know even if it is your right to open such confidential letters.”

“But Pierrot cannot read.”

“It is well that he cannot. He would become too proud.”

He was very serious and then he began to laugh.

"A Don Juan at four months," he said. "What will he be at four years!"

The next week Pierrot received a letter which read like this:

"Beaulieu, France,

"August 17.

"MY DEAR PIERROT:

"When you were in the village yesterday, I saw you. My heart is lost. Your eyes are wonderful, and I am drowned in those eyes. Why were you not born in Russia? I adore you. I shall wait in Moscow until you are twenty and then shall return. Your adoring comrade,

"PRINCESS TROUBETOWSKI."

I cannot tell any more except to say that almost every week my Pierrot received letters like these. One he received from a countess in Germany; another from a noble lady in Florence; still another from a princess of Spain. Every week some grand lady saw my Pierrot in the village or looked over the garden wall and saw my Pierrot there and wrote to him.

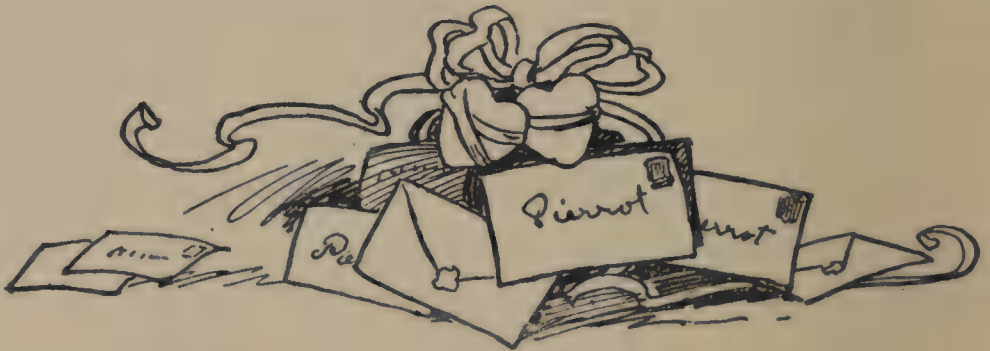
Yes, I believed them all. It was not until I had fear to go upon the street with my Pierrot or to walk in the garden with him that Monsieur Jack Martin told me this was only a jest and that he himself had written those letters and given them to Antonin.



At first I was sad about this because I did not like to think Monsieur Jack Martin would make me believe a thing which was not true. I think he saw how I felt. When Antonin came the next morning with the mail, Monsieur Jack Martin said to me:

"Not so serious, Little Mother. That was all a little joke for Pierrot. Truly, if these noble women should see Pierrot, it is even so they would write. Then you would have real cause to be serious."

I saw that this was true and became glad it was all a jest, for it was not well for Pierrot at that age to receive such letters.



## CHAPTER XV

**I**T was the week my Pierrot was one week over five months old that I awoke in the night hearing him cry. I thought he had hunger and placed him at my breast, but he turned away.

I shall never forget that. It was the first time he had ever done such a thing and my heart stopped beating. If I had been pierced with a knife, I could have felt no sharper pain. All I remembered was the baby of the Countess. It was so he had done. It was horrible because here was the one thing that gave Pierrot life, and he turned from it. It was as if he refused to breathe.

I tried again, and again he turned away his head with a little moan. I felt his cheeks and they were hot. My head sank back upon the pillow and for a moment I was so faint I could not move. Then, because I knew my Pierrot must receive from me help of some kind, my strength returned. I could not permit even my fear to hold me when my Pierrot stood in need. I leaped from the bed and lighted a candle. Then I saw that his cheeks were red with fever and that his face was troubled. His eyes were closed, but he moved as if not knowing what he was

about and he cried. This was a different cry from any I had heard. It was not loud or long but short and more like a moan. It was as if he did not wish to cry—like one who shuts his teeth together and cries through them.

I took him in my arms, covering him well with blankets, and began to walk with him. At all other times this had brought him comfort, but now it did not. He would be quiet for a few minutes and then he would cry out. Each time he did this, it was as if a knife had been thrust into my heart. Because it was night, it was yet more terrible. My Pierrot and I were as much alone as if everyone else in the world had gone and left us. Every cry he made was to me like the shriek for help of one drowning. Yet no one came. My Pierrot and I were alone.

I thought of calling Monsieur Jack Martin, but I knew that he could do nothing. I thought of Doctor Jambeau, but I feared what he might tell me. I feared everything. I feared to be alone and I feared to have anyone come. I feared the dark outside and I feared the shadows inside. I could not think from one second to another. I held my Pierrot as tight as I could and walked back and forth. Sometimes I sang to Pierrot and sometimes I cried, and sometimes I prayed. I prayed to the Father and to the Virgin Mary and to Pierre and even to the little Count who was now with the Father. I prayed for the light and prayed that Pierrot might sleep and prayed that



Doctor Jambeau might come and that he might not come.

For a few minutes Pierrot was quiet and then he awoke with a start as if frightened. Twenty times I put him to my breast and twenty times he turned away his head, and twenty times I suffered such pain as I did not know it was possible for anyone to suffer. Even now I catch my breath when I remember it.

But the thing that hurt me worse even than that, though it did not seem possible that anything could, was when he reached up his little hand for my neck as if asking me to drive away his pain, and I knew I was able to do nothing. Once he opened his eyes and looked at me as if not understanding. Those eyes were hot and had a film upon them. Then I could not longer hold my Pierrot but placed him on the bed and sank upon my knees. I had no strength in me and could not see. Pierrot moaned upon the bed. I could not make him understand that if it were possible, I would draw from him with my kisses all the pain and all the fever. To give him comfort for a minute I would have taken his pain for all my life. He knew only that he suffered and that I knelt by his side not helping him.

Then I cursed myself for a coward and took him again in my arms and walked with him. First my strength went and then it came, and then it went again and then it came again. I lived a hundred years that hour. It was not as if Pierrot

alone was sick but as if all the world were sick with him. It was as if the end of the world were about to come. If the skies had burst and rained fire, it would not have been any more horrible. I saw nothing but the dry cheeks of my Pierrot, and heard nothing but his moaning.

Then I saw Monsieur Jack Martin at the door. I heard him say:

"What the devil is this?"

"Pierrot is sick," I said.

"Sick?" he said. "Let me see him."

He held out his arms, but I would not let him take Pierrot. He gave one look at his cheeks and heard one cry, and I saw his face turn white.

"Why did you not tell me?" he said.

I remember that I would not have been surprised greatly if he had raised his hand and struck me.

"I'll have Jambeau here in ten minutes," he said.

Then he ran from the room. If he stopped to dress, I do not know, but I heard the door below close and knew he had gone. I had thought myself alone before, but I was now still more alone. From that moment I did nothing but listen. I listened until I thought my ears would break. At every noise I started and broke into perspiration. Once I thought I must run out of this house and find Lucille Corbeau. Of all people in the world I wished most to see her. I thought she was closer to God—closer even to Pierrot than I was. I cursed myself for not telling Monsieur Jack

Martin to bring her to me. And as I did this, I looked at the door and there stood Lucille. At first I thought I had died and this was a vision. She was half dressed and had a shawl over her head. Her face was white.

Then Lucille said to me like this:

"Pierrot called. Give him to me."

I placed Pierrot in her arms and fell upon the floor. I knew nothing after this until I heard in the room the voice of Doctor Jambeau. Then I sprang to my feet and demanded my Pierrot. It came back to me that he was sick and I did not know if he lived. I saw Lucille sitting in a chair with my Pierrot in her arms. She raised her hand and said:

"Be silent. He is sleeping."

But Doctor Jambeau seized me by the arm and said:

"Into that bed."

I saw Monsieur Jack Martin standing by the side of Lucille.

"Right," he said. "In with you."

"But Pierrot——"

"In the name of God," said Doctor Jambeau in his most terrible voice, "can not a healthy boy cut a tooth without having the whole world turned on end?"

I heard that and if it had been a pardon from a king to a man about to die, it could not have sounded better. I climbed into bed and I heard the voices of those two men as if they came from ■



long distance. To Monsieur Jack Martin, Doctor Jambeau said:

"If you call me from bed again for such a thing as this, I will employ a boy to wake you every night for a month."

And Monsieur Jack Martin said: "How was I to know he was cutting a tooth?"

"Then you had better learn," said Doctor Jambeau. "Because in the next two years and a half he will cut nineteen more."

"Well, you do not expect me to remember thirty years back, do you?"

"It is a blessing of God that we do not remember what we all of us suffered the first three years of our lives or we should go mad," said Doctor Jambeau.

Then suddenly Doctor Jambeau turned upon Lucille.

"How did you come here?" he said.

"I do not know," said Lucille.

"Where is your crutch?"

"I do not know," said Lucille.

Doctor Jambeau put his hand to his beard. I rose upon my elbow to see. For a minute he spoke not a word. Then he said:

"Walk across this room."

Lucille rose and walked easily with no pain and only a little lameness. Then Doctor Jambeau said:

"You knew Pierrot was sick?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

"And no one sent for you?"

"No, Monsieur."

Then Doctor Jambeau said to Monsieur Jack Martin:

"That is worth getting up in the night to see. Come with me."

So the two men went out. I looked at Lucille and Lucille looked at me. But we said nothing and I find nothing to say even now. I have written this just as it was.

## CHAPTER XVI

WHEN my Pierrot awoke, the fever had gone. But all that week it came and went, remaining sometimes four or five hours and sometimes only an hour. Even when I knew it was not dangerous, it was terrible. Every time it came, my Pierrot looked at me, or at Monsieur Jack Martin if he was near, and said as plain as if he talked, like this:

"I am only a little boy and I trust myself with you people who are so big, and you do nothing. You permit me to suffer pain and do nothing. I do not understand this. I do not know if you are safe to trust."

He said that with his eyes until I was not able to look him in the eyes because what he said was true. As for Monsieur Jack Martin, when he saw that look, he became angry and shook his fist at the air.

"You are right," he said to Pierrot. "It is a shame for a little fellow like you to be bullied. We are nothing but helpless idiots—we men and women. We can do nothing. But you endure like a man—like a man from Yale. If we had a needle pricking through our gums like that, we would be howling like whipped dogs."



Then he would say to me:

"Little Mother, I feel as if I must go out and fight someone. Why does not the good Lord wait until a man is full grown before picking on him like this? It is not right."

To me it was not as if I had cut my own teeth in this same way or Monsieur Jack Martin had or all the world had, but as if this pain were put upon my Pierrot alone. It was no comfort to be told that every baby must cut teeth. That did not concern me. It was my Pierrot who suffered, and it was as if he were the first one and the only one in all the world made to suffer like this.

Now that was very strange and very selfish also, but it was like this with everything concerning Pierrot. To me he was the first baby ever born. When I heard of other babies, it was as if they were some other kind of babies. They were not like Pierrot. They were like dolls which suffer nothing and never grow. If they were sick, I had pity not so much for them as for their mothers, but when Pierrot was sick, I had no pity for myself but only for him. I do not know if it is like this with all mothers, but it was so I myself felt.

Lucille came every day and Monsieur Jack Martin liked Lucille. She came without her stick, and Monsieur Jack Martin watched her with Pierrot and was very kind to her. He was to her always as if she were a woman of noble blood. I do not know how he made me feel this because he was the same in speech and manner to all women,

but he had with her an air as if she were not like other women. He was very gentle with her and liked to talk with her.

As for Lucille, she told me she thought Monsieur Jack Martin was the best man in all the world. And she said a strange thing one day.

"Little Mother," she said. "He is the only man I have ever seen who never gives me fear."

She said that of Monsieur Jack Martin when it was fear and nothing else that most people of the village had of him. I myself had no fear of him but that was because he was so good to my Pierrot, but it was not this same reason that made Lucille feel like that. It was something different.

At the end of a week Pierrot was like himself again and when I placed my finger in his mouth, I felt the little point of his first tooth. I called to Monsieur Jack Martin and showed it to him, though my Pierrot was not proud and did not wish to show it.

"Wonderful," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "Now that is what I call good work. I will bet that you yourself could not grow a tooth in one week."

"I would not have the heart to try, Monsieur," I said.

"That is it," he said. "We call these little fellows infants when we are the real infants. Think of all they have to worry about. They are growing arms and legs and muscle and bone and hair and teeth—and yet most of the time they

smile about this. They are learning to see and hear and speak a new language in addition. They are doing this without help and without experience, and yet we think we are the busy ones. Why, if we had half as much to do in a day without help, we would curse and become Socialists. Bah!—we are the infants.”

I remember this because I thought it was true and that for this reason older people should never lose patience with children. Babies have so many things to do of which we do not know. But you would have thought that tooth of Pierrot’s was a wonderful jewel, to see how Monsieur Jack Martin delighted to show it. When Antonin the postman came, Monsieur Jack Martin took him by the sleeve and said:

“Do you wish to see something?”

“Yes, Monsieur,” said Antonin as if he expected to see something no one before had ever seen.

“I will ask Little Mother.”

So Monsieur Jack Martin brought Antonin to me and I tried to make Pierrot open his mouth, which he did because he smiled, and then Antonin stooped low and looked.

“A tooth!” he said.

“The best tooth a boy ever grew,” said Monsieur Jack Martin.

“I believe you, Monsieur,” said Antonin.

I knew that with all his children Antonin must have seen such things before, but I said nothing. Even if I knew this, I was very proud because



after all he had never seen before a tooth of Pierrot's.

"I will tell this to Marie and Marie will tell this to Juliette and Juliette will tell it to the Countess de Beauchamp," he said.

It was like this the news of my Pierrot's first tooth spread about the village. That afternoon, when I walked in the garden for a few minutes with my Pierrot, Jean came. He looked over the wall and waved his hand to us and was about to go when I called to him. He came with one eye over his shoulder as always.

"I have heard," he said.

"Would you like to see it?" I said.

"Yes," he said.

"Then if you will make him smile and look very quickly, you can see."

So Jean took his cap and threw it in the air and Pierrot smiled at that.

"Did you see?" I said.

"I saw nothing but his smile," said Jean.

So Jean threw his cap again and again Pierrot smiled, but if you will believe, Jean did not see that tooth.

"You tell me it is there. Very well, I believe you," said Jean. "Permit him to rest with it."

I asked Jean how it went with Madame and he said, "as always."

"But she tells many lies about Pierrot," he said. "I know because Lucille tells me they are lies."

"What does she tell?" I said.

"She tells that Pierrot does not have enough to eat and that he lacks colour and is very sad here," said Jean.

"Now that is not right," I said.

"What can you do with Madame?" he said.

Then he came closer to me.

"Do not forget. If this Monsieur Jack Martin is not good to you and Pierrot, we will go away. I have that money you gave back to me and I am hiding it. We will go along the road and be happy."

"Ah, Jean, do you still remember that?" I said.

"I dream sometimes that we have gone," he said.

"Do not even dream it," I said. "No one in the world is so fortunate as I am. Monsieur Jack Martin could do no more if he were my father."

"One can never tell what will happen," said Jean.

It was soon after this that Jean left and no more was he hidden from sight than Madame herself came. I showed her Pierrot's tooth and permitted her to walk a minute with him, but this day I did not like her and made an excuse for returning to the house as soon as possible.

## CHAPTER XVII

NOW you would think that with a little boy who could not speak and could not walk and could not hold up his head except for a few minutes at one time, one day would be like another day. But when I look back, I find so many things happened that if I live to be a hundred years old, I could never tell about them all. And everything is of importance. Once Monsieur Jack Martin said to a man who came often to the Villa and who was a great actor in England, this:

“Here is something for you to tell those fellows who write plays; let them put upon the stage, a baby. Let them choose him anywhere, and place upon the stage that baby—a plain, ordinary baby. Then let him grow before their eyes. There is your drama all written for you. You will have a new drama every day and a new kind every day. That baby will make them laugh, make them weep, make them fear, make them pray. He will reach the heart of any audience in the world, I care not what language it speaks.”

That actor laughed and said:

“But it would be necessary to have there the



particular baby of every man and woman in the audience."

"Wrong," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "You could even please an audience of old bachelors—like me."

"Yes," said that actor, "if it were possible to find an audience of old bachelors—like you."

I do not know, but I wrote down what they said as I wrote down many things which seemed to me true. I do know well, however, that with Pierrot I had no hunger for more excitement than he gave me. Before he came I remember only a few things which moved me deeply. When my father died was one; when Pierre told me he loved me, was another; when I was married to Pierre was another; and when Pierre died was another. Those were big things, which one does not forget. But after Pierrot came, every day was like those few days. In the morning to watch him play and laugh was like watching the funniest man who ever tried to make people laugh in a theatre, and was to make one happy as on a marriage day. I have seen Monsieur Jack Martin laugh until the tears came into his eyes. And if Pierrot wished to make you weep, *ma foi*, he could do that. And if anyone in the theatre can make me fear more than Pierrot has done, I do not wish to see that. All day long I lived and dreamed as I had never lived or dreamed before. When night came, I desired nothing but to close my eyes, and even when I did

that, it was with wonder of what might happen before I opened them again.

One day everything was quiet and my Pierrot was very calm. In the afternoon I learned that we had no coffee and so I placed Pierrot in the little carriage Monsieur Jack Martin had bought for him and went to the village. It was a very beautiful day and very warm, and Pierrot liked very much to ride. Pierrot had in his hand the doll which Jean made for him from a stick and he beat the side of the carriage with it, laughing aloud.

On so beautiful a day as this, I did not think it was possible for anything to happen which was not also beautiful. Yet it was on this day that something did happen, which proves that with a boy like Pierrot it is not possible to tell anything in advance. At the store of Monsieur Jordaine I left Pierrot in his carriage by the door because it was so fine in the sun. I saw no one on the street and went in to buy my coffee and thought no more about him. Monsieur Jordaine asked me many things about how it went at the Villa and I was there perhaps five minutes. Then I heard a great shout and ran to the door. By the side of my Pierrot stood George Debauux, and running away down the street with a pistol in his hand was Jules Tupin, the *gendarme*, and running before him barking and showing his teeth was that wild dog of the village called L'Ogre. I did not know what had happened but I seized my Pierrot. He was

whole and was laughing, thinking Jules Tupin and the dog were making sport for him as Jean did when he threw his cap in the air.

"What is it?" I said to George Debaux when I was able to breathe.

"That wild beast was at the carriage," said George.

Many people gathered, and then Jules Tupin came back with the pistol in his hand. He was a little man but he carried himself like a general. Now with his arm he moved the people away and stood in front of me with his head far back.

"I guess that will teach you something," he said.

"I do not understand," I said.

Jules Tupin put his pistol in his pocket, taking a long time about it so that all could see. Then he said:

"But for me your baby would be no more."

All the women pressed about him and, as for me, the strength went from me.

"I can never thank you for this," I said to him.

"I do not care for thanks," he said. "This is my business. But never again leave that baby alone in the street."

"I will never do it again," I said.

Marie, the wife of the cobbler, came near.

"Did the beast not eat that baby at all?" she said, as if sorry.

"No," said Jules Tupin. "I was too quick for



him. But as I followed the beast down the street, I did not know when he would turn and eat me. I will shoot him some day."

"I saw the beast at the carriage," said Madame Dupont. "My heart stood still and I could not move."

"My own heart stood still," said Jules. "But I dashed upon him and when he saw me, he ran."

"What a brave man!" said Marie, who, it was said, had her eyes upon Jules Tupin.

"I shall tell Monsieur Jack Martin about how brave you were," I said.

"That American should give Jules a pension for that," said Marie.

By now my strength had returned and I wished to get back to the Villa. I thought I should never have courage to take Pierrot anywhere after this. But all this time he was laughing at first one and then the other.

I placed Pierrot in his carriage and as I went down the street, all the women looked after me, and Jules stood in their midst telling them again how it happened. As I turned the corner, George Debaux came up with me.

"I will go with you to the Villa," he said.

"Thank you very much," I said. "And I think you were almost as brave as Jules Tupin."

"Do you know what that wild beast was doing at the carriage?" he said.

"No. Please do not tell."

"I did not wish to tell before Tupin and the

women," said George. "But he was licking the hand of Pierrot and Pierrot was pulling his nose."

"The beast was preparing to eat him?"

"No," said George. "I do not understand, but Pierrot had no fear of the beast and the beast had no fear of Pierrot. It was as if the beast were trying to make friends."

"But that is not possible," I said.

"I do not know about that," said George, "but it is true. I saw. I do not think he would have hurt Pierrot at all. It was when the beast saw Tupin that he showed his teeth and growled."

"But they say that beast is very dangerous."

"That is possible. But Jean Lacroix, who is the husband of Madame Lacroix, says it is not true. I do not know, but he says if people would only give the dog peace, he would be like a lamb."

"That is very well," I said. "But I shall not leave my Pierrot before the store again."

"Pierrot only laughed," said George. "He is a wonderful boy. Some day he will lead an army."

When I told Monsieur Jack Martin, he was at first very serious.

"If ever I see that dog, I will put him where he will do no more harm," he said.

But when I told him how the women pressed about Tupin and what George Debauux said, he began to smile and then to laugh.

"And Pierrot here pulled his nose?" he said. "Fine! Fine! And the women said Tupin should have a pension? I know that Tupin. It is a

pity Pierrot did not pull his nose also. Debaux is right and Jean is right. The poor dog is bullied out of his wits here. If I ever see that dog, I'll bring him home."

It was not long after this that Monsieur Jack Martin came home with that dog. For a week he kept him tied back of the house and fed him well and washed him and made much of him. Then he freed that dog and if he had been a kitten, he could not have been more gentle. After this the dog would not leave, and Monsieur bought a collar for him and called him "Sport." This dog sat by the side of Pierrot's carriage and if anyone came near, they had better have a care. But as for Pierrot himself, he treated that dog shamefully and that dog said nothing.





## CHAPTER XVIII

I HAD not seen the Countess de Beauchamp since that day she came to visit Pierrot soon after her own little baby died. Doctor Jambeau told her that it was necessary for her to travel much so that she would forget. I did not know about the Countess, but I knew that as for me, I would not wish to forget but to remember. I would wish to remain where my baby had been and lose nothing of every minute he had been with me. I would wish all his things around me and go every day where we had been together. I would not think him altogether dead as long as I was able to remember. To me it was worse to forget a baby than to bury him. I said nothing, but often I thought of the Countess and wondered if it was true she was able to forget.

Then on the week before Pierrot was six months old Madame Lacroix came into the garden and told me the Countess was back again.

"She came to the house and said she would like to see Pierrot," said Madame Lacroix.

"She may see my Pierrot any time she wishes," I said.

"She is a fine woman," said Madame Lacroix, looking at me.

"I have a great pity for her," I said.

"She has a fine house and a great fortune. If she liked your Pierrot, she might do great things for him."

"I do not know what more my Pierrot could have than he has now," I said.

"It is necessary to look ahead," said Madame Lacroix. "Some day this devil of an American will go. Poof!—like that. Then where will you be?"

"I have too much to do every day to look ahead," I told her.

"Because you are a little fool. Bah! You think only of yourself."

"I do not know why you say that," I said.

"Because it is true. But I know some things you do not know. And I say to you that if Madame, the Countess, does you the honour to come and see your Pierrot, it is well if you are very polite to her."

"I try to be polite to everyone," I said.

"And remember that you must think not of yourself always but of Pierrot."

I did not know at this time all that Madame Lacroix had in her mind, but I did not like what she said. From morning until night I thought of nothing but Pierrot. I thought nothing of myself and was willing to die for Pierrot if it were necessary. Such talk sounded strange to me.

"The Countess can do nothing either for me or my Pierrot," I said. "But if she desires to see my Pierrot, she may come to-morrow."

"She does not desire to see that devil of an American."

"Monsieur Jack Martin would do her no harm. But if she desires to see no one but Pierrot, I will be here in the garden with him to-morrow afternoon."

"I will tell her that," said Madame Lacroix.

I said nothing to Monsieur Jack Martin, but the next day after luncheon I dressed Pierrot in his finest clothes and made ready to see the Countess. It was a little time after the clocks in the village struck three that I heard an automobile stop by the gate. Then I saw Madame, the Countess, stop there and I went to meet her with Pierrot in my arms. She was not dressed in black now, but she was very thin and her face was very white. She came a few steps towards me and then stopped and placed her hand to her heart. I shall never forget the expression in her face. It was terrible. First it was like pain and then like anger and then like such a sorrow as would never go.

"You are sick, Madame?" I said.

"No, no," she said. "It will go in a minute."

She sat upon a stone bench and turned away her head as if she did not wish to look at either Pierrot or at me. Then I knew that Madame, the Countess, even if she had travelled far and had been given everything a fortune could buy, had not for-



gotten. It is little these great doctors know about a mother when they command her to forget.

From my arms Pierrot looked at her and smiled. Madame, the Countess, had in her hat a great feather, and Pierrot looked at that and smiled and reached for it. Then he laughed aloud and the Countess turned suddenly towards me.

"Your baby is well?" she said.

"Yes, Madame."

Her lips grew thin as I said that. I pressed my Pierrot closer to me.

"My baby would have been six months old to-day if—if——"

She could not finish—that poor woman.

"Would you like to take Pierrot in your arms?" I said.

"Yes, yes," she said. "Give him to me."

So I placed Pierrot in her arms and then for the first time she saw him. She looked at him as if with hunger, and he smiled at her. Then she looked at me and then back again at Pierrot.

"He has never been sick at all?" she said.

"He had pain with his tooth but that was nothing," I said.

"He still nurses?"

"Yes, Madame."

"Ah, that is wonderful," she said. "His cheeks are red and his eyes are bright. And his flesh is warm—warm," she said.

"He is able to hold up his head also," I said.

"He smiles and has life. He has life! *Mon Dieu!*—what a wonderful thing that is!"

Then she stopped and kissed my Pierrot upon the cheek. He smiled and hid his head in her bosom, thinking he was being tickled. When he did like that, she drew him to her so hard that it made me fear. It was as if she would never permit him to go again. Pierrot did not struggle but lay there, and then she began to sing softly to him—the same song that Madame Lacroix sang. She rocked back and forth singing, "La, la, la." If I had closed my eyes, I should have thought it was Madame Lacroix and not the Countess de Beauchamp sitting there singing to my Pierrot. Her face grew tender and the anger and the pain left her mouth. Once she looked up at me.

"He has no fear," she said.

"No, Madame."

"I think he likes me."

"He likes all the world," I said.

My Pierrot was playing with some jewels at her throat.

"He does not know if he is with me or with you," she said.

My face grew hot when she said that.

"My Pierrot knows well," I said.

"I wonder," she said. "If I close my eyes, I am almost able to make myself believe this is my baby," she said. "Why then should he know any difference?"

It was necessary for me to shut my hands tight not to seize my Pierrot at once when she said that.

"My Pierrot knows his mother," I said.

"Every woman may be the mother of any baby if she will," said the Countess. "They know us only as women."

"I think it is time now for my Pierrot to return to the house," I said.

"See how he lies here," she said.

She began to smooth his hair and pat his back, and he looked up and smiled at her.

"It is time for him to go," I said again.

"He does not wish to go," said the Countess.

I held out my arms for my Pierrot but he did not see. The Countess laughed at this and rose with him at her breast. Then I thought of something and laughed myself, for I knew that breast was empty.

"You do not think he would go with me? See."

With Pierrot in her arms she walked towards the gate and as for me, I stood where I was, not able to move. The blood went from my cheeks and I was like one in an evil dream. I wished to cry out and could not, and saw her continue towards the gate. My Pierrot lay in her arms and said nothing. And the Countess turned back her head and laughed at me where I stood.

"You see," she said. "I am his mother."

In another second I would have screamed. In another second I would have rushed forward and clutched at the throat of this woman, not caring



if she was a Countess. I could have killed her where she stood. But when she spoke, my Pierrot raised his head and seeing me, gave a little cry. I waited for no more. I seized my Pierrot from her arms and covered him with kisses.

"Now you see," I said. "He called for me."

Then the Countess said, "Yes, he called that time. But in a little while he would not call."

"I do not know what you think my Pierrot is," I said in anger.

"Just a baby," said the Countess. "Just a dear little baby. They are all like that."

That is what she said. It shows what kind of a mother she was. If I had pity for her before, I had no pity for her that minute.

"I must go into the house now," I said.

"You have fear?"

"No," I said.

"Then you will permit me to come again—tomorrow?"

Now I did not wish her to come again to-morrow, but it was not for me to say that to a noble Countess.

"If you wish," I said.

"I wish it very much," said the Countess. "And I thank Pierrot and you for an afternoon of rest."

It was possible that she had an afternoon of rest, but I myself did not have such an afternoon. I was glad when she went and left me alone with my Pierrot.

## CHAPTER XIX

NOW I said nothing of this to Monsieur Jack Martin. I do not know why except that this was a matter between Pierrot and myself and no one else. I was much troubled all night. Never before had I wished my Pierrot could talk, but when I awoke in the dark this night, it would have been a great comfort if he had been able to speak to me. He himself awoke once and I lighted a candle, not liking the dark, and while he nursed, I looked into his eyes, which were wide open. I remember what I said to him. I said this:

"Is it true, Pierrot, that to you one woman is like another woman?"

He smiled at me when I said this.

"Is it true," I said, "that you have no more love for me than for the Countess?"

Again he smiled and one could not tell at what.

"I gave you life and all these months I have preserved that life," I said. "You are part of me—your body, your heart, your soul. Yet the Countess says this makes for nothing. That is not true, Pierrot?"

If only my Pierrot could have said that one word,

"No!" If only he could have shaken his head even! But he would do nothing except eat and smile.

"Would you go away and live in content with the Countess?" I said.

But he made me answer every question myself and though I did, it was not as if he had answered. I knew that apart from me my Pierrot would grow sick and die. I knew he would be very unhappy away from me for even one day. I knew he knew that no one else in all the world could care for him as I did. I saw it in his eyes. But if only he could have told me that with his lips!

At first I thought I would make some excuse not to see the Countess that next day but as I thought of this, I had fear she might think I did not trust my Pierrot. So in the afternoon I went out in the garden to meet Madame, the Countess de Beauchamp. But this time when she came, I did not give her Pierrot to hold in her arms. She saw this and said:

"Is it that you do not trust me with Pierrot or do not trust Pierrot with me?"

I said nothing.

"My arms are so empty," she said with a sad smile.

At this moment my Pierrot reached for the jewels at her throat and I could do nothing after that. Madame, the Countess, looked this day as if she had not slept at all during the night. Even Pierrot could not make her smile very much.



She talked in a low voice of many things as she played with Pierrot, but I remember she talked most of how to have a boy like Pierrot was a great responsibility as well as a great joy.

"Such a boy," she said, "should have fine training. He should have a tutor until he is strong enough to go to school in Paris. There he should remain many years and then he should travel. There is nothing to make a man big like travel. Have you thought of that?"

"No, Madame," I said.

"You should think of that at once," she said.

"But it is necessary to have a great fortune to do such things," I said.

"Yes," she said, looking at me.

Then she told me of what this school cost and that school cost and of how much it was necessary for me to spend to dress my boy like a gentleman and of how much it cost to travel. She talked like that until my head was in confusion.

"But such things are not for Pierrot," I said at last.

"Not for Pierrot?" She said this in such a way that I felt ashamed.

"Not because I do not wish him to have them but because it is not possible," I said.

"But if it should be made possible?" she said, looking at me.

"Then he should have them," I said.

"You would make any sacrifice?"

"Yes, Madame."

"You would not consider too great any pain you yourself might suffer if only your son had what he should have?"

"Certainly I would not," I said.

"That is right," she said. "If you thought of yourself at all in such a matter, you would not be a good mother."

She was silent a moment and then she said as if to herself:

"I am sure I myself would feel as you do. I know that if my boy had lived, I would have been willing to toil with my hands until I died, had that been necessary, to give him what he should have. There is nothing I would not have done. I would have begged in the streets for him; I would have stolen for him if there had been no other way. I can think of no sacrifice I would not have made for him. If only he would come back to me! *Mon Dieu!*—why cannot he come back to me?"

She was crying and spoke as if not knowing what she said. I shall never forget what she said after this.

"Permit me to take your place," she said. "Permit me to come here and toil and serve and take your baby. You may have all that I have now if you shall do that. Let me come and serve for Pierrot."

"Of what do you talk, Madame?" I said.

"I do not know," she said. "I do not know."

She said nothing more of this but cried and hid

her face in Pierrot's hair. And as she did that, my heart ached for her and I came closer.

"Madame," I said. "It is not possible to undo what God does."

Then she raised her head.

"You must not make me believe God does such things," she said. "Do not try to make me believe that."

Her eyes were so wild I had fear.

"I do not know, Madame," I said.

"If it is not possible to do anything further with those who are taken, it is possible to do much with those who are left," she said.

"Yes, Madame."

"From the beginning to the end we mothers must sacrifice. That is the law."

She spoke of this as a sad law but as for me, I saw only happiness in it. A woman is only a woman until she becomes a mother, and then she is twenty women. I look back and wonder how without Pierrot I lived as long as I did.

Madame, the Countess, rose. She kissed Pierrot and gave him back to me.

"I have spoken of this boy to my husband and he wishes to see him. May I bring him with me to-morrow?" she said.

"Yes, Madame."

"Then *au revoir*," she said.

Pierrot looked up at me and smiled, and I walked in the garden with him until he slept, which is something I seldom did.



## CHAPTER XX

WHEN Monsieur Jack Martin came home that day, he was not in a very good humour.

"It is necessary for me to go to Paris for a few days," he said. "I must leave to-night."

"Yes, Monsieur."

"Can you not have Lucille come and remain with you while I am gone?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

"Are you afraid?"

"No, Monsieur."

He called Sport to his side and stooped over him with one finger stretched out.

"Listen, Sport," he said. "I wish you to guard these two women and that boy while I am gone. Understand?"

Sport looked up at Monsieur Jack Martin and wagged his tail.

"If anyone comes here at night after the doors are locked, eat him up. Understand?"

Sport put back his lips from over his teeth and growled.

"That is the idea," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "And I will bring you home a piece of beefsteak."

Monsieur Jack Martin packed his bag at once,

and the manner in which he packed it was to throw into it whatever he saw at the moment and then to strap it together. Then he stood over Pierrot.

"Do not grow any more teeth until I return," he commanded.

Pierrot smiled and held out his arms to be carried and though Monsieur Jack Martin had little time to waste, he picked him up and carried him across the room twice.

"If you were three months older, I would take you with me," he said.

He returned Pierrot to the basket and before I knew it he had gone. It was like this Monsieur Jack Martin did things. If he had been going to America, he would have gone just like that. It was to leave one without any breath.

Now at first I thought I would go at once and find Lucille but as I moved about the house with Sport at my heels, it seemed to me good to be alone once again with Pierrot. I thought I would go after dinner, but it was late when I finished and Pierrot made me laugh so much that I did not realise how the time went. By then I was so tired that I locked the doors and with Sport near me was content to sit and think. I had no fear and Sport was very good company. He lay with his nose on the floor and if so much as a bird flew by the house, he raised his ears and looked about as if to say: "Have a care. I am on guard."

Sitting there alone, I said over again to myself

all that the Countess had told me. I heard her cry again: "Why can he not come back to me?" Noble blood she had and a husband and fine dresses and jewels and many friends, and yet none of these things served to bring back her baby. Without that baby she was not as rich as I. She had said she would change her place for mine and toil with her hands not only for her own baby but for my baby. Now that did not seem to me so very strange, but it made me feel very big and grand. Here was I with only my Pierrot, and yet I had more than a noble Countess. It made me sing to myself. I began to sew on a little dress I was making for Pierrot and I sang to myself feeling that no woman in the world was so fortunate as I.

Then I began to think of what she said about what Pierrot should have and I stopped my singing. It was true that while my Pierrot was a very little baby, he needed no more than I was able to give him, but when he became a big boy, then he would expect me to give him everything as I now did. Those schools in Paris required a fortune and though now it was very easy to make what he wore how would it be when he wore the clothes of a man? I could not sew such things for him. As for travel, I did not know how that was possible by any means. Then my Pierrot might turn upon me and demand why he did not have what other boys had. It was then that the fortune of the Countess, which now counted for nothing,



would count for everything. Such thoughts as these made me fear. I took a pencil and paper and began to add how much thirty francs a week would be in ten years if I saved every sou. It did not add up to very much and, as Madame Lacroix said, Monsieur Jack Martin might go away at any time as he had gone away this day. So from singing I fell to sighing and in order not to do this, went to my room and made ready for bed. With Pierrot near me I could never be sad for long.

Sport came with me and took his place outside my door. It was when I blew out my candle that he growled a little and walked back and forth smelling of the air. I did not like this and again lighted the candle. He went down-stairs and then came back again and with his nose on the floor slept once more. So once again I blew out the candle and soon after this was asleep myself.

I do not know what time it was when I awoke and heard Sport. I sprang from bed and lighted the candle. The dog was at the top of the stairs with all his teeth showing and was growling fiercely. I called to him but he did not move. I listened hard and thought I heard a noise below. I partly dressed myself and then took my Pierrot in my arms. The next thing I heard was when Sport rushed down the stairs with a great barking and growling. Then I heard a voice command him. It said:

“Quiet, old friend. Quiet.”

He was quiet after this except for a little whine

which he was in the habit of making when Monsieur Jack Martin returned. I thought it was Monsieur Jack Martin come home again. With Pierrot in my arms I took the candle and went to the stairs.

"Is that you, Monsieur Jack Martin?" I said.

Then up the stairs, two at a time, came a big man, wearing a cap over his eyes, and Sport was at his heels as if playing with him. I knew who it was. It was Gaston Battaille, a thief and a very bad man. In his hand he had a heavy stick. He wore a beard and his eyes shone like those of a demon. For a second he looked at me. Then he blew out the candle, leaving us all in darkness. My knees shook and I said:

"Do not harm my baby. I am here alone with him."

"If you are silent, I will do neither of you harm," he said. His voice was like a growl.

"I will be quiet but if you do not have a care, you will wake my Pierrot."

"The devil!" he said. "I would rather have twenty dogs in a house than one baby."

For a moment he stood in the dark as if listening and making a plan. Then he said:

"I have hunger."

"If you will be very quiet, I will prepare you something to eat," I said.

"But the light. Here you—go into that room and remain until I call you."

"Yes, Monsieur," I said.

I went into my room and sat upon the bed. Now the thing I could not understand was why Sport did not drive him from the house. It was not because the dog was afraid because he was afraid of nothing. It was as if Sport was a friend of his. I knew that if ever Monsieur heard of this, he would kill that dog.

All this time Pierrot slept as if nothing at all were happening. He slept in my arms, caring nothing that a thief was in the house. I held him tight but I thought of all the horrible stories that were told of this Gaston Battaille. It was said there was nothing he would hesitate to do. When mothers wished to frighten the older children to remain quiet in their beds, they said: "You have a care that Gaston Battaille does not hear you." That was enough because it was said he had carried many bad boys away into the mountains. And here was Gaston Battaille himself in the house and my Pierrot asleep.

When I heard him coming again, making no more noise than a cat, I held my breath.

"Where are you?" he said in a whisper.

"Here," I said.

"Come down-stairs. Make no noise and bring that little devil with you."

I hurried as fast as I could in the dark and followed his steps into the dining-room. Then he shut the door and lighted a match. I saw that over the windows he had hung coverings so that no light could escape. He had done this also



over the single window in the kitchen. He looked at me for a full minute as if to see if I meant to betray him. Then he said:

"I have a desire for one good dinner, if I never have another."

"Yes, Monsieur."

"Then put that little devil on the floor and prepare it."

"I will place my Pierrot in his basket."

"I care not where you place him if only he does not cry."

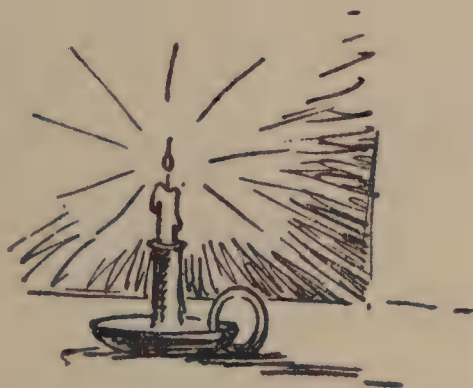
"If you do not talk so loud, he will not cry," I said. "My Pierrot fears nothing."

"He had better fear me," said Gaston Battaille. He made the blood leave my cheeks.

I said: "There is that dog——"

When I said that, he threw back his head and laughed.

"We know each other—that dog and I," he said.





## CHAPTER XXI

I PLACED Pierrot in his basket and was about to carry him into the kitchen with me when Gaston Battaille said:

"Leave him here and then I will know you will not jump from that window."

"I will promise," I said.

"This infant is better than a promise," he said.

I could do nothing except obey, but I was very glad when Sport crossed the room and lay down at the foot of the basket as he did always when Pierrot was in the garden. Then, while I prepared food for this man, I saw him open one drawer and another, taking out the silver and placing it together in one pile. I was angry because I thought this was a poor way to pay for a dinner in the middle of the night. When he finished, he said:

"How long before this dinner is ready?"

"Ten minutes," I said.

When I said that, he lifted my Pierrot, basket and all, and started from the door, and I ran into the room.

"You must not take my baby," I said.

"Rest easy," he said. "I will do him no harm if you do me no harm."

"Put him back upon the floor," I said.

"Listen," he said. "I have business in the other rooms. I shall take him with me to make sure you give no alarm."

"I promise I will not. I swear it," I said.

"What do I care for the oath of a woman," he said. "No more talk and make haste."

"Everything is ready," I said. "I will have it upon the table in one minute if only you will not take Pierrot."

"So you lied about the ten minutes. Very well, if you lied once, you will lie again. Talk no more."

He went out of the room with the basket under his arm and with Sport following behind. I ran back into the kitchen and gathered everything I could find and placed it upon the table. As soon as I had done that, I followed after him. I found him in the room of Monsieur Jack Martin. He had placed Pierrot upon the floor and was searching the room for what he could find. It made me wish that Tupin, the *gendarme*, might come in. I gathered courage to say in a whisper:

"Supper is ready, Monsieur."

He rose and turned towards me.

"Go," he said.

I returned to the dining-room, but I stood near the door listening as hard as I could. So I stood for perhaps five minutes, hearing the beat of my own heart and nothing else. Then I heard Pierrot and knew that he had awakened. I did two things when I heard that; I rushed into the



kitchen and seized a big knife and then I went as softly as I could to the door of Monsieur Jack Martin's room. I had no fear now. I knew for certain what I would do if this thief harmed my Pierrot. I felt that minute as strong as Monsieur Jack Martin. I made no noise as I went and held the handle of that knife so tight the blood left my fingers. I knew that I must not be seen—that I must creep upon that man from behind, before he had time to strike at me. When I looked in at the door, Gaston Battaille was leaning over the basket as if uncertain what to do. Then I made ready to spring upon him but before I was able to move, Pierrot laughed. He laughed and held up his two arms to Gaston Battaille as if it were Monsieur Jack Martin.

"Silence," said Gaston Battaille to Pierrot.

Once again Pierrot laughed aloud and held out his hands trying to raise his head. As for me, I watched my Pierrot with such wonder that I forgot what I was here to do. There was that infant not six months old making sport of this great wicked man. And Gaston Battaille knew not what to do. It was clear he had fear that if he left the basket, Pierrot would cry, and as for doing harm to him, that was impossible when Pierrot laughed. Sport came beside him and whined and wagged his tail for Pierrot. Then Gaston Battaille stooped and lifted my Pierrot into the air. I stood ready, but I knew from the way Gaston Battaille placed his hands below the arms of my

Pierrot that he meant no harm. He lifted Pierrot into the air and Pierrot laughed. Then as he came near, Pierrot seized the beard of Gaston Battaille and pulled it.

"The devil," said Gaston Battaille. "Well, if you will not sleep, you must help."

So he placed Pierrot upon his knee and with one hand continued his wicked work. I did not like this. It made me feel as if my Pierrot were also a thief, but now I did not have the strength to do anything. If Gaston Battaille had harmed my Pierrot he would be now a dead man, but when he was kind to him I had no courage,—no, not even when he made a thief of Pierrot. I stood and watched. I saw Pierrot pull his beard again and saw Gaston Battaille do nothing but shake his head gently to free himself. I saw Pierrot reach for his hair and saw Gaston Battaille do nothing but move out of reach of those small fingers. I saw Pierrot beat his nose and laugh aloud as Gaston Battaille made a face. Then Gaston found a ring and gave it to Pierrot and for a minute Pierrot played with that.

This continued for a long time until Gaston Battaille, the thief, had robbed the room of everything of value, filling both his pockets. Then he stooped to place Pierrot in his basket once more, but Pierrot would not permit this.

"Your mother will run a knife into me if she sees you in my arms," said Gaston Battaille aloud.

The man spoke in jest, I think, but he did not know how near he had been to having that come true. I hid the knife behind my back. But, *ma foi*, Pierrot did not care if it were at the cost of a man's life, he must have his own way. He made up a face and cried a little.

"Silence," said Gaston Battaille. "Have it as you will."

As he came towards the door, I ran back into the dining-room without making any noise and placed the knife out of sight but within reach. When Gaston Battaille saw me, he said, looking ashamed:

"Here, take this devil of an infant. He would not remain in his basket."

I did not wait to hear more but took Pierrot in my arms.

Gaston Battaille sat at the table and ate with great mouthfuls and tossed upon the floor pieces of meat for Sport. All the while my Pierrot kept his big brown eyes upon the man and laughed at him when he did those strange things. No one said anything except Pierrot, but I did not like my boy to see such manners. When Gaston Battaille had eaten almost everything I brought to him, he rose.

"I am going," he said. "Perhaps I shall be outside the house here one hour, perhaps two hours. If you know what is well for you and that little devil, you will remain here until morning."

"I will remain," I said.



But once again Pierrot laughed at him and I think when Gaston Battaille heard that, he was again ashamed. When a man tries to be very ferocious, he feels only foolish if he is able to do nothing but make a laugh. He came to Pierrot and made a face at him, and before I could help it Pierrot had struck him on the nose.

"You are a brave boy, little one," he said. "You should live in the mountains."

Then Gaston Battaille went out. I did not know what to do but I knew my Pierrot must sleep. So I returned to my room and placed him upon the bed and in a few minutes he closed his eyes as if what had happened was nothing at all worth remembering. As for me, I sat there until morning, jumping at every sound.

## CHAPTER XXII

WITH Monsieur Jack Martin in Paris I felt very much alone. I did not know what to do about this Gaston Battaille. In the morning Lucille came and I told her what had happened, and she listened with her eyes very big with fear.

"It is another miracle that you both were not killed," said Lucille. It was so Lucille thought about everything of good that came into her life or the lives of her friends.

"I do not know," I said. "And now I suppose I must tell Monsieur Tupin about this affair."

"That is a great pity," said Lucille.

"But is not this Gaston Battaille a thief?"

"Yes," said Lucille.

"Is he not a very wicked man?"

"It is very wicked of him to steal," said Lucille.

"Then what will you? He stole from Monsieur Jack Martin."

"Yes. But is it not strange that Pierrot laughed with Gaston Battaille and that Sport played with him?"

"I do not understand that," I said.

"He was very hungry?"

"Yes."

Lucille was silent a moment and then she said:

"That Gaston Battaille is very wicked, but I have great pity for him."

"But he stole from Monsieur Jack Martin."

"Yes," said Lucille. "So I would permit Monsieur Jack Martin to do what he wishes when he returns. If Pierrot had no fear of him, then that Gaston Battaille must have a good heart."

"Ah, Lucille," I said. "You think all the world has a good heart."

"Even that is possible," said Lucille. "It is so Pierrot thinks and you see."

Now that was true. I remember only once when Pierrot was not able to make a man laugh with him, and to laugh with Pierrot was to show a good heart.

"But do you think a man with a good heart can also be wicked?" I said to Lucille.

"If he is hungry," said Lucille.

"I do not know," I said. "But I do know that if everyone were like you, Lucille, there would be no need of Monsieur Tupin in the village."

Then I thought of how I myself had said that if my Pierrot was hungry, I would steal for him if necessary. Also the Countess had said the same thing. So if Monsieur Jack Martin desired to have Gaston Battaille hanged when he came back, he must do that himself. As for the things Gaston had taken, it would be as easy to recover them a week from now as to-day, I thought. I was very angry with him for taking those things from Mon-



sieur Jack Martin, but I did not think that Monsieur Jack Martin would feel any better about not having them even if Gaston Battaille was hanged.

Lucille remained with me the rest of the day until it was the hour for the Count de Beauchamp to arrive and then she said she would go home and come back in the evening. If I had not promised yesterday, I would not have seen the Count. I was very tired and did not wish to talk. I thought I would permit this Count to see Pierrot for a moment and with that done return to the house at once.

I have heard people say that when they were in danger, they had warning. Sometimes they were told by an evil dream; sometimes by signs; sometimes by a sinking of the heart. Now as for me, that was never true. All my misfortunes have come to me in as ordinary a way as the little things of every day. I would awake in the morning with the sky blue and the sun shining and go about my affairs with a light heart and then step into some great trouble as one stumbles and falls. To-day I was tired and sleepy, but I saw nothing before me except a wearisome hour.

The Count came into the garden without the Countess. He was a very tall man and very sharp in his speech and manners. He wore a mustache which turned up and, when I saw him, I did not feel that here was a man who had lost his baby, as with the Countess I felt here was a woman who

had borne and lost. I felt only that he was a count from the top of his fine hat to the toes of his fine shoes. Neither did I feel with him, as I did with Monsieur Jack Martin, that here was a man who looked upon my Pierrot first and upon me afterwards. My Pierrot liked him well enough and held out his arms to him, liking well to be carried by men, but the Count, after looking at him as he might look at a dog he was about to purchase, gave all his attention to me. When he did take Pierrot in his arms, it was as if to feel his weight. As for Pierrot, he pulled at the Count's mustache as he had pulled at the beard of Gaston Battaille.

"Tut, tut," said the Count. "Where are your manners?"

"It is his way of playing," I said.

"Well," said the Count, "one does not like even in play to lose one's eyes."

This was as Pierrot reached for his nose.

"Give him back to me, Monsieur," I said.

He placed Pierrot in my arms and then leaning upon his stick, said this:

"The child has never been sick?"

"No, Monsieur."

"The father was always in good health?"

"Pierre you mean?"

"If Pierre was the father's name," he said.

"He was in good health until he died," I said, not understanding.

"And you?"

"Very well, thank you, Monsieur."

"Good. You know, of course, that the Countess has become very much attached to this infant?"

"I know only that because of her grief I have permitted her to hold Pierrot in her arms," I said.

"That has been enough," said the Count. "That has undone six months of travel."

"I have great pity for Madame," I said.

"I am sure the Countess appreciates that," he said, with an air that made me feel he was smiling although he did not smile. "But that is not enough."

"It is all I can do, Monsieur," I said.

"Let us see. Has the Countess not told you what she desires?"

"No, Monsieur."

"Then I will tell you. She wishes to take this infant here and make him like her own child."

When I heard that, I almost fell.

"Take my Pierrot?" I said.

"Exactly. She plans to give him everything she would have given her own child. You know what that is—education, travel, name. In fact, she will make a gentleman of him."

"Take my Pierrot?" I said.

"As for you, we will give you a pension for life," he said.

If only he had not said that! It sent the blood to my cheeks. It was as if he were paying me to sell my Pierrot. I held my baby so close to me he cried. Then I looked about in terror and in hope I might see Monsieur Jack Martin.



"Do not be a little fool," he said. "If you care about that child, you must understand what a great thing we propose to do for him. You yourself are able at best to make of him a peasant and leave him to make other peasants. We will take him and make a gentleman of him. You must consider this not for yourself but for him. If you refuse this offer, you refuse for him a fortune."

That was true. There was nothing now that I could say with words. All I desired was to get as far away from this man as possible. I began to move towards the house and he followed.

"Listen," he said. "The Countess has set her heart upon this or I would not waste ten words with you. This Monsieur Martin is away, I understand. Well, I will bring a notary, and we will have the papers drawn before he returns."

"No; no; no," I said.

"Think it over to-night. A fortune for your child; a pension for yourself. I will come again to-morrow."

"No," I said.

"You do not understand the Countess," he said. "What she puts her heart upon, that she has. Consider it well for your child, not yourself."

When he left me, I do not know. I sat upon the ground and rocked my Pierrot back and forth, holding him to my breast.

## CHAPTER XXIII

I KNOW that in what I did after this I used no reason. I had no reason left to me. I know this because in looking back upon those next few hours, I remember nothing except the great fear which possessed me. It is as when one awakes at night in terror with the evil dream fresh but the details of it gone. I wished to take my Pierrot as far away from this place as possible. I did not think of Monsieur Jack Martin or of Lucille or of Jean or of anyone. When every minute connected with my Pierrot is as clear to-day as when it happened, I remember about this only, that when night came, I found myself with Pierrot upon a steep road leading into the mountains. I must have gone into the house again for I had a warm shawl for Pierrot, but that was all I had. It was not until it began to grow dark that I returned to my senses. I was very tired and I think I must have run a great part of the way. I sat down beneath a pine-tree. My Pierrot cried for his supper, and I put him to my breast. This brought me such peace of mind that I was able to think once more.

I had no fear now—nothing of fear. I was in



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*The town of Eze*





the mountains alone with my Pierrot with the dark coming and nowhere to go, and yet I feared nothing. I had heard there were wolves in these mountains, but I did not think of them. I wrapped my Pierrot well in his shawl and drew him close to me while he nursed, and feared nothing. Far below where I sat I saw the waters of the sea turned green and gold by the green and gold of the sky. I saw the rocky shore for a long way with the towns of Villefranche and St. Jean at my feet. All about me there were a thousand trees. Above my head was the town of Eze. Without knowing where I went or caring, I had taken the road to Eze, but now I sat a little way back from the road where I could not be seen.

As the sun sank lower and lower, I sang to my Pierrot. Then I felt again as I had felt when my Pierrot was first born. He and I were alone with God. With all the gold in the sky and with the cuckoos singing sleepily and no other sound except the breathing of my Pierrot and the breathing of the wind in the pines, it was almost as if we two were alone in Heaven. It was not yet cold and it was not possible for me to feel cold anyway with Pierrot safe at my breast. I did not think what I was to do and did not care. I cared about nothing except that we two were together here. Never in all my life have I felt as peaceful as I felt then. I shall never forget that.

When my Pierrot finished, he looked at me and I kissed him a hundred times. Then he fell

asleep in my arms. I watched the colours fade from the sky until there was nothing left but the dark purple and the stars. I did not feel that I was out of doors. It was as if I were in some big church. I did not remember at that time anything the Count de Beauchamp said; I did not remember even Monsieur Jack Martin or Lucille. I remembered nothing. It was as if Pierrot had just been born to me and we sat here possessing the whole world. Neither noble titles nor fine clothes were of any matter out here. There was nothing to worry about. We were here, my Pierrot and I, and that was enough. I wish my Pierrot and I could have lived like that always.

It was the sound of some animal approaching along the road that first disturbed us. I heard the rattle of loose stones and heard his breath. It had grown very dark now. I did not move, hoping the beast would pass, but he left the road where I left it, and came straight towards us. I saw only a shadow and heard a great sniffing, and then he was upon us. He leaped at me and I kicked out with my foot. I heard a cry like the frightened cry of a child who has been struck, and I knew this was Sport. He had come to find me and I had struck him as he sprang to lick my hand. The cruelty of this went to my heart.

"Forgive me," I said quickly. "I did not know who it was."

These beasts are so quick to forgive! I sat down and he came crawling along the ground to-



wards me, whining in his joy and covering my hand with kisses as if it were he who should be forgiven. It made me wish to cry. I patted his head and permitted him to sniff at the shawl of my Pierrot so that he would know my son also was safe. This gave him comfort and he lay down at my side, for he was breathing heavily as though he had run a great way. Now of all the world he was the first to seek my Pierrot and share with me the night. He was only a beast and he had done this. I was very glad to see him but it was a long time before I could forget that when he had come, it was I who had struck him.

So the three of us sat in the dark on the mountain-side, but Sport, after he rested a moment, became uneasy. He rose and walked about smelling at everything as if he did not understand. When I called to him he returned, but rested only a moment by my side and then went again. Sometimes he came back whining as if he desired me to go with him.

"Rest easy," I said to him. "We are safe here."

Then he would lick my hand. He did this for the matter of an hour, exploring the forest farther and farther each time he went. Then once he did not return again.

I did not understand this. I blamed him and was hurt to think he had deserted us. I called to him but he would not return. So I said to myself that he was only a beast after all. If it was not possible to trust men and women, then, *ma foi*, one

must not expect to have dogs remain faithful. I tell these things in shame to show how I myself often did not judge fairly.

As the night went on, it became cold. My Pierrot was not cold, but now that I was calmer I felt the night air more than I did at first. I was not cold on the outside but I became cold inside. I took the corner of the shawl from my shoulders and wrapped my Pierrot warmer. And that boy slept as if in his own bed. That was wonderful. It was this which made me think of him again as a great general. On the field of battle he would wrap his cloak about him and lie down on the ground and sleep. He was able to put out of his head all thoughts of danger. Even now there might be wolves about, but he did not care. Like a brave soldier he said only: "Come what will, I must have my sleep." I have known men full grown who could not do that. I could not do that myself. And it was not because he thought I guarded him, because he knew I was only a woman and could do little if a pack of wolves came upon us. It was only because he was without fear absolutely that he could do that. He was like Napoleon, of whom I heard at school.

As for me, as the night went on I wished that Sport were with me. A dog is very good company because he seems always awake,—always on guard. As they say of some men, he sleeps with one eye open. But Sport did not often come into the mountains I thought, and I supposed there was

much for him to see. And while I was thinking this, he came back. He came to me running and whining and wagging his tail as if in great joy. Then he ran off again and then returned once more until I had fear he would wake Pierrot.

"Be silent," I said.

But he would not be silent, and ran off into the trees once more. When he returned this time, there was a man following. I could see nothing but a form, and rose to my feet. The man said nothing, but stood beside a tree looking at me. As I thought it might be the Count de Beauchamp, my heart stopped.

"Who goes there?" I said, as soon as I was able to find my voice.

Then he strode forward.

"What the devil are you doing here?" he said.

Then I saw that it was not the Count de Beauchamp. It was that very wicked man, Gaston Battaille.



## CHAPTER XXIV

GASTON BATAILLE came nearer me and sat down with his arms folded across his knees.

"Well," he said. "What the devil are you doing here?"

"I do not know," I said.

"Well," he said, "how the devil did you come here?"

"I ran here," I said.

"Why?"

All this time Sport was running from me to Gaston Battaille and from Gaston Battaille to me, whining and wagging his tail as if he was trying to make us good friends. It was as if he said to each of us: "You two are alone here. Do not quarrel, but help each other." And truly out here beneath the stars it was difficult to think of Gaston Battaille as a very wicked man. It was not as when he came to the house of Monsieur Jack Martin to steal. I thought of him only as a strong man who meant no harm either to me or to Pierrot. It was because of this I found myself telling him things just as they were.

"He wished to take my Pierrot," I said.

Gaston Battaille looked up quickly.

"Who?" he said.

"The Count de Beauchamp," I said. "He came while Monsieur Jack Martin was away to take my Pierrot."

"He tried to steal him?"

"He was coming to-morrow with a notary——"

"I know," said Gaston Battaille, rising to his feet. "They do not steal with a stick—those noblemen; they steal with a notary. They steal according to law. The devil take their souls—they run no danger."

"I do not know if he meant to steal," I said.

"He made you fear, eh? He said you should be glad to give your infant to a noble count—eh?"

"Yes; yes. It was like that," I said.

"He waited until you were alone before he told you that—eh?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

"He would rob a mother of her child—the beast. Bah, I have stolen many things, and with luck will steal many more, but I have never yet stolen infants. When I try that, may I not have in my arms the strength of an infant so that even Tupin can hold me."

"I do not know if the Count meant harm, only I ran," I said.

"Where are you going now?"

"I do not know," I said.

He thought a moment, and then he said:

"I have heard no news from the village."

"Of what?"

"Of what happened last night. Ordinarily the excuses of that fool Tupin reach to the mountain tops here."

"He knows nothing," I said.

"You did not tell him?"

"No, Monsieur."

"Why not?"

"Because—because Lucille said she thought you had a good heart."

"Lucille Corbeau told you that?" he said with a laugh. Then he said without a laugh: "The poor little devil."

He stood for a moment looking down upon the sea and the lights of the village below. Then he turned quickly.

"Follow me," he said.

He moved into the trees and I followed. It did not seem to me strange that I should follow him without questions. He was no longer Gaston Battaille, the thief; he was only Gaston Battaille, a strong man. It was not the Gaston Battaille of Tupin I followed; it was the Gaston Battaille of Lucille. So I followed, not knowing where, as I would have followed Monsieur Jack Martin.

The road was rough and steep, and I had not eaten for many hours. With Pierrot in my arms it was difficult. At the end of ten minutes it was necessary for me to stop.

"I must rest," I said to Gaston.



He stopped when I said that. When I rose to go again, he held out his hands to take my Pierrot.

"I will carry him," he said.

I did not like to give my Pierrot to him and he saw this.

"Have no fear," he said. "I am not a noble count."

It was because I had fear I might fall that I placed Pierrot in his arms. After this it was easier for me to follow him. We went a long distance and always up the side of the mountain, which was as steep as a flight of stairs. We were not in the road or even a path, and yet Gaston knew every rock. His feet were so steady that he did not slip as much as Sport, who often fell upon a rolling stone. As for me, toward the end I was as much upon my hands and knees as upon my feet. I was thirsty and hungry, but I felt as happy as if I were going home. The farther we went from the village below us, the more content I became.

At the end of an hour we came to a village on the top of the mountain. I turned around once and saw the sea so far below that it looked like a pool. We went down one street after another and they were all very narrow and rough. There were no lights in the houses and we met no one. On the very edge of this village where the pines began again, there was a small house of stone and here Gaston stopped. Before going in he said to me:

"Say nothing to anyone here of who you are or from where you came."

"Very well, Monsieur."

"Say nothing to anyone of what you know about me."

"Very well, Monsieur."

Even now I had no fear though I was going into a strange house and among strangers. For one thing I was now too hungry and too tired to think about anything. And then there was nothing else to do. It mattered little how I felt. It was necessary for me to go somewhere with my Pierrot, and one place was like another.

Gaston Battaille opened the door and went in. I heard the voice of a very old woman.

"Is that you, Gaston?"

"Yes, grandmother," said Gaston.

Just to hear him say "Grandmother" gave me comfort. Here was another woman and an old woman.

"I will light a candle," said Grandmother Battaille. In a moment she came to meet us with the candle over her head. But when she saw what Gaston had in his arms and saw me behind him, she stopped.

"What is this?" she said.

"Just a stranger and an infant," said Gaston.

"They were lost upon the mountain."

"Lost? Then they must be cold and hungry, eh?"





*We came to a village on the top of the mountain*





"I have no doubt the woman is, but this little devil here is warm and fast asleep."

"Tut, tut. I will stir the fire."

We went into a room which contained a stove, and Grandmother Battaille put in wood, and soon the fire was blazing. I took my Pierrot in my arms and sat down. Just to sit down in this warm room with my Pierrot in my arms again was all the happiness I desired. Gaston bent over the stove warming his hands, and the little old woman patted him upon the back as she passed.

"You are early to-night, my grandson," she said.

"Yes," he said, looking at me as if to give warning not to speak.

"You said you would be on guard until morning."

"Tupin relieved me," he said.

"That is good," said Grandmother Battaille.

"You have been working too late this last month."

Now I understood nothing of this, but this is what I found out later; this Grandmother Battaille was very proud of her grandson and she thought he was a *gendarme* in the village of Beaulieu. Yes, that is what she thought. When he came home with strange things like watches and jewels, she thought these were presents given to him for his bravery. There were those in the village who knew better, but they never told Grandmother Battaille, and even those who knew had an affection for Gaston. That is the truth and whenever there was a robbery Gaston came back with

presents for his bravery. There were people who laughed about this, but as for me, it made me wish to cry more than laugh.

Grandmother Battaille placed some soup upon the stove and then came to where I sat.

"This is your infant"? she said.

"Yes, Madame."

She looked at me sharply and then at Pierrot. Then she said:

"He should be in bed. Come with me."

She took the candle and led me into another room, and there was a clean bed.

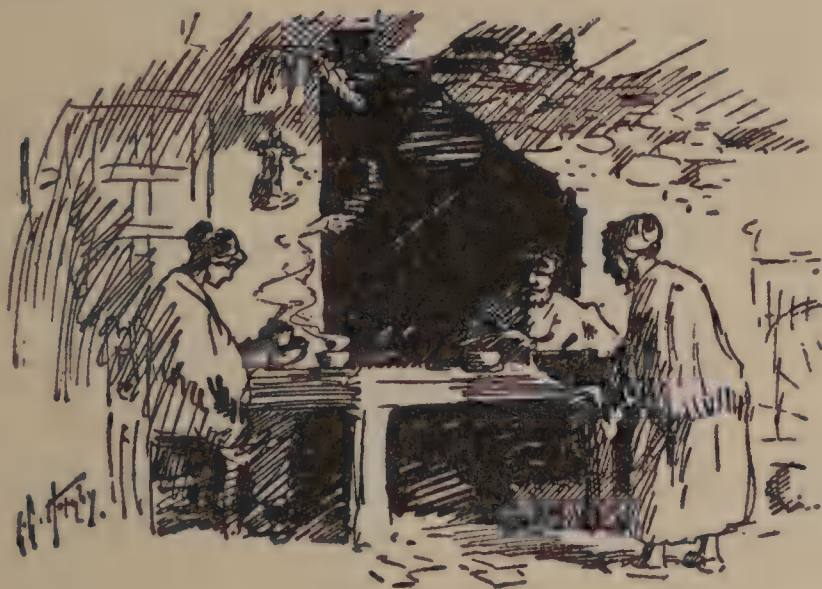
"Place him in there and then come back," she said.

When she went out, I heard her talking in a low voice to Gaston but the thing at which I marvelled was that here were Pierrot and I alone again, as if by magic, in this strange room and that it was like home. I placed Pierrot in the bed and looked at him. His eyes were closed and he was very beautiful. He was so calm and so untroubled that in a minute this was like my room at the Villa Cornice, or like my room at the house of Madame Lacroix. It was all one where we were—my Pierrot and I—if only we were together and he was untroubled. It did not matter greatly whether the house was that of an honest man or a thief. I did not think at all of the Count de Beauchamp but I did miss Monsieur Jack Martin even if I did not miss the Villa Cornice. He would like to see my Pierrot sleeping here so calmly, I thought.



I could hear his voice even then saying: "Here is a man from Yale." Whenever my Pierrot was calm in the midst of danger, that was what Monsieur Jack Martin always said. Of course there really was no danger, but Monsieur Jack Martin, not knowing Gaston Battaille as I did, would have thought there was danger.

I bent over my Pierrot and kissed him and then returned with the candle to the other room. Grandmother Battaille had ready two bowls of hot soup and I sat down facing Gaston Battaille and we ate our dinner together.



## CHAPTER XXV

I SLEPT late that morning because no one woke me until Pierrot himself woke me. He was lying by my side, singing to himself and playing with his toes. The songs of birds came in at the window, and the sun made a golden path across the bed. My first thought was that I was late in preparing breakfast for Monsieur Jack Martin, and then I remembered all that had happened since he had gone to Paris. It was very strange that I had been able to close my eyes and forget all those things for so long. When I first thought of them that morning, it was as if I picked up a book and began again to read a romance where I had stopped the night before. With Pierrot at my side, singing and playing with his toes, as if nothing at all had happened, it was difficult to believe that anything at all *had* happened. When he saw that my eyes were open, he laughed aloud and held out his arms to me.

I do not know anything so fine as to wake to such a greeting as this. I kissed his hair and his little nose and his mouth and his neck. My Pierrot was so warm and soft all over! Then I placed him to my breast and lay back with all my muscles

aching with the joy of lying here. I tried to think, but I was too happy. All the days of my Pierrot came back to me as if crowded into those few minutes. It was again as if the world had been made for him and he had no interest in anything else. It was no affair of his what went on so long as the sky remained overhead and I was near him. The sun shone and the birds sang as well for him up here in the mountains as below by the sea-shore.

After he ate his breakfast, I arose and made my toilet. It was then I realised I had fresh clothes neither for him nor for myself. What was worse, I had no money with which to buy them. It was then I saw that I was not as free as I dreamed. When my thoughts were upon Pierrot, I was never able to consider anything else. Pierrot always made me feel as free as the birds of the air. It was so simple a matter for him to live! He slept wherever he happened to be; he found his dinners by opening his little mouth; he found warmth by creeping close to his mother. To be with him was to think it was as simple an affair for everyone.

When I was dressed, I went into the next room to see Grandmother Battaille and I asked her if she had anything I could use for my Pierrot.

"You have been so good to me already, I do not like to ask you for more," I said.

"It would be a pity if a child must go naked in



my house," she said. "Come here. Gaston still sleeps."

She took me to a chest of drawers and showed me what she had. In those drawers there was everything which a baby might need. The things were carefully folded and there were dried rose leaves sprinkled among them.

"I have saved them all. They are the clothes my Gaston wore when he was a baby," she said.

Now it was almost impossible to think of Gaston Battaille as ever having been a baby like my Pierrot. But as Grandmother Battaille took out those clothes, smiling as she did that, she talked as if Gaston were a baby even now.

"See," she said. "It was in this dress he was christened."

Then she took out other things—little skirts and shoes and caps. As she did that, she said: "It was this he wore when he was six months old," and "These were his first pair of shoes," and "He wore this when we went to see his cousin Louise," and "He was dressed in this at the funeral of his mother."

To see those things so very small and then to think of Gaston as big as now, was like a story of fairies and giants.

Even Pierrot, looking at them from my arms, began to laugh.

"Yes," said Grandmother Battaille, patting the hand of my Pierrot. "Yes, if you are a good boy

and grow, then you will become some day a fine big man like my Gaston."

It made me hold my breath when she said that. It might be that I wished my Pierrot to be as big a man as Gaston but I did not like to think that he would become the same kind of a man. Yet Grandmother Battaille had seen Gaston as an infant like my Pierrot and, for that matter, saw him even now as an infant. To her he was the best man who ever lived. That was very strange.

She bade me take what I needed and I did, because there was nothing else I could do, but it made me sad as I put those clothes upon Pierrot. I thought of many things of which I had never thought before. That was because for the moment I considered only the fact that these two were alike in being babies. But that was all in which they were the same. Pierrot was a baby of course and Gaston had been a baby of course, but after that Pierrot was Pierrot and Gaston was Gaston. Also I remembered that once Napoleon had been a baby like my Pierrot. But if one stops to think about it, it is very strange how much alike all babies are when they are babies. Gaston and Napoleon and my Pierrot could wear the same clothes when they were six months old, and a stranger could not choose one from the other.

When I dressed my Pierrot and returned to the kitchen, I found breakfast prepared.

"Gaston sleeps late in the morning," said

Grandmother Battaille. "*Ma foi*, it is hard work being a *gendarme* in the city."

"Gaston is a *gendarme*?" I said, not knowing at this time what he told his grandmother.

"Do not tell me you have not heard of my Gaston!" she said, not liking what I asked her.

"Of course I have heard of him," I said.

"Perhaps you have heard more of that Tupin," said Grandmother Battaille. "Bah! He is jealous of my Gaston and to hear him talk, you would think he was a regiment. My Gaston says little, but it is Gaston and not Tupin who receives the presents for bravery."

Pierrot was seated in my lap and he reached for a spoon and laughed, so that it was not necessary for me to say anything because Grandmother Battaille began to play with him.

"He is strong—that boy," said Grandmother Battaille. "It was so Gaston played at his age. At nine months he was able to walk alone."

"Pierrot is not yet able to stand upon his feet," I said.

"Have patience," said Grandmother Battaille. "He will be a man like Gaston if you have patience. How would you like to be a fine *gendarme*—eh?"

Pierrot waved the spoon in the air as if it were a stick.

"Yes," said Grandmother Battaille, "some day you will do that and frighten away the thieves."

When she said that word, it made me tremble.



I was glad when Gaston himself came out. She rose from the table and went to him to be kissed. Then she made a place for him opposite me and we all three began our breakfast. I will never forget. Pierrot desired to sit with Gaston as soon as he entered, and I could do nothing but permit it. Then Grandmother Battaille continued to talk though Gaston tried many times to stop her. I had pity for that man. As she said one thing and then another about his bravery and his goodness, he looked at me and turned red and then white and then red again. If never Gaston was punished for his sins before or after, he was punished then. And it was not so much by me as by Pierrot, who understood nothing.

"See how that baby grasps your thumb," said Grandmother Battaille. "It was so you grasped the thumb of your grandfather. Do you remember—my Gaston?"

"No," said Gaston. "Do you think it will rain today?"

"Your grandfather sat here and he was very proud of you, my Gaston. Every morning after breakfast he took you in his arms and walked over the whole village with you. If he could see you now!"

Then Gaston asked me if I had been warm enough and if I had been too warm, while Pierrot pulled at his beard. Then Grandmother Battaille said:

"That baby wishes to be a great *gendarme* like

you, Gaston. After breakfast you must show him your pistol."

Then poor Gaston rose from the table and placed Pierrot upon his shoulder. He had eaten nothing. He walked back and forth, showing Pierrot everything in the room, anxious only to stop Grandmother Battaille from talking. My Pierrot clung to his hair and was very happy.

## CHAPTER XXVI

AFTER my Pierrot returned to bed for his morning nap, I found a moment when Gaston was alone on the steps outside the house, and spoke to him.

"I do not know what I shall do," I said.

"That is simple," he said. "Rest where you are. That noble gentleman, the Count, cannot find you here."

"You are very good," I said to him. "If you will permit me to remain here until Monsieur Jack Martin returns, I will pay you thirty francs a week, which is what he pays me."

"You will pay me nothing," said Gaston.

"I am a stranger. It is right that I should pay," I said.

"I have enough," said Gaston.

It was when he said that, I remembered for the first time this morning what Gaston Battaille had done in the house of Monsieur Jack Martin. It made my cheeks turn red when I thought how it was he had enough. And even if I knew how good he had been to my Pierrot and how good he wished to be, I could not permit him to be good to my son with what he had taken from Monsieur



Jack Martin. That would be as if Pierrot had helped him in his wickedness. So I said:

"Unless you permit me to pay, I cannot remain."

"Why not?" he asked quickly.

"Please do not ask me," I said.

I saw by the way he turned from me that he understood and that I had hurt him. I did not wish to hurt him.

"Gaston," I said, "Lucille says that you have a good heart and I believe that. I do not know why you do as you do, and I do not wish to speak of it. Perhaps you do not understand that Monsieur Jack Martin is my friend and has done much for Pierrot and me. I would starve before I took from him anything he did not give."

"He is rich. He has enough," said Gaston.

"I do not know about that and I do not care," I said.

"He is an American," said Gaston.

"And a gentleman," I said. "Please do not make me talk about this any more. I leave at once if you do not take my thirty francs."

Gaston looked at me a moment, and then he said:

"I will not take your money," he said. "But I will promise you something. Everything I took from the house of that American is here. If you remain, I will give it to you to return when you go back."

"Do you mean that?" I said.

"I have promised," he said.

"But, Gaston," I said, not understanding even though I was very glad to hear him talk like this. "What makes you do this?"

"What makes me?" he said. "I do not know. Perhaps it is that devil of a Pierrot who looks at me."

"My Pierrot?"

"He has the eyes of a judge," said Gaston.

"You make me very proud, Gaston," I said.

This was just as it happened. I said no more than I have written and Gaston said no more. My Pierrot did everything without speaking even one word. At six months he was like a noble judge. He was better than a noble judge because he did not make of Gaston a worse man by sending him to prison. He made Gaston confess to himself his own wickedness, as a good priest does, and then led him to return what he had so wickedly taken. That is what my Pierrot did in a few hours without asking advice of anyone. I left Gaston at once because I was not able to wait before looking again upon my Pierrot. I went into the room where he slept, and stood by his bed. His eyes were closed and he slept with his two arms over his head. Then I saw that truly he did have the features of a judge. His forehead was broad and high, and his mouth firm though not hard. He had a chin which was round but also firm. It was possible, I thought, that after all he might not be a great general but a great judge in a scarlet robe. With his light hair my Pierrot would look very handsome

in a scarlet robe. So I sat upon the edge of the bed and saw the many people who might be brought before him, and thought of how kind and just my Pierrot would be to them. Pierrot would not be like Jules Tupin, who wished either to shoot everyone or send them off to prison, but he would look at them as he had looked at Gaston, and then, *ma foi*, they must tell the truth not only to him but to themselves. I have seen that when a man tells the truth to himself, then he becomes a better man.

Gaston remained near the house until my Pierrot awoke. I think it was because he wished to know what Pierrot would say of what he had done. Grandmother Battaille saw that something was the matter because she said to Gaston after he came into the house for the twentieth time:

"You have not had enough sleep, my boy."

"Yes, yes. I have slept enough," he said.

"But you wander about like that dog," said Grandmother Battaille. It was Sport she meant, who was first in the house sniffing for Pierrot and then out again and then back to find Pierrot.

"Do not talk any more," said Gaston.

"Very well," said Grandmother Battaille.

She was like a child, that old woman, and when Gaston spoke like that she obeyed him without reply. But she sat in a corner and watched him so anxiously that I took a chair near her so that she could talk to me. She spoke in a low voice and always about Gaston, going back to the time





*Grandmother Battaille*



when he was the age of Pierrot. After a little while, though I nodded my head, I heard only her voice, but nothing at all of what she said because I was thinking of my Pierrot and not of her Gaston.

When Pierrot awoke, I put fresh clothes upon him, and brought him into the kitchen. Gaston held out his arms for him at once. Then I watched and I saw Pierrot look at Gaston, and I saw Gaston look at Pierrot, meeting him eye to eye. Then Gaston laughed and said:

"Here, this boy should be out of doors. Give him a cap and I will take him down the street."

Grandmother gave me a little bonnet and coat, and I dressed my Pierrot in those things. Then Gaston took Pierrot out.

"It was so my man carried Gaston through the village," said Grandmother Battaille.

This was enough to make her tell me all over again about that.



## CHAPTER XXVII

NOW that first day I lived in the mountains with my Pierrot, I did not think twice of the Count de Beauchamp. He was like an evil dream forgotten as soon as one wakes. Up there so high above the village, it was as if we were living in another world. It was no more possible to think of the Count de Beauchamp coming here than it was to think of an automobile coming here. Such things were for the valleys. Here everyone lived as they lived many years ago. There were no noble men or women, but each man had his little garden and grew what he wished to eat. The women knit and everyone sat much in the sun.

I thought of Lucille and of Jean and of Monsieur Jack Martin because I knew they would like very much to be here. I thought it was possible that Monsieur Jack Martin could live here even in the home of Gaston and find pleasure. He would like to be so near the stars and he would like Grandmother Battaille.

On the second evening, Gaston went to the Villa to see if there were any lights. When he came back, he said the house was dark.



*Here everyone lived as they lived many years ago*





"But," he said, "everyone in the village talks of nothing else but where you have gone."

"They talk of me?" I said.

"The whole village is searching and there are a thousand stories about you."

"Why do they search for me?" I said.

"If that American does not return soon, I have fear they will be after him in Paris and also up here in the mountains."

"But why should they trouble him?"

"They say he has stolen you both."

"Even if they think that, why should they trouble?"

That is what I could not understand. Until now no one had troubled about me. I might have gone hungry and starved by the road side and no one would have cared.

"Perhaps it is that Pierrot," said Gaston.

Then I saw. It was true that whether I lived or died was of no great matter to anyone, but as for Pierrot, everyone cared. A little baby six months old was of more importance in the world than a woman fully grown. It made me much prouder to have them search for my Pierrot than to have them search for me. It proved what a fine baby he was.

"If I could send word to Lucille——"

"I saw Lucille and told her," said Gaston.

"That was very kind of you, Gaston," I said.

"She knows how to keep silent," said Gaston,

"but she told me that the Countess de Beauchamp had a dozen men out searching for you."

"This is not her affair," I said.

"I do not know," said Gaston, looking anxious, "but it is well if you remain in the house tomorrow."

"What do you say?" said Grandmother Battaille.

"That it is well if Madame and this infant remain in the house," said Gaston. "The air is colder here than the air below."

"That is right," said Grandmother Battaille. "It is so I have said."

She always said, "It is so I have said," to everything Gaston said.

I did not like to think that so many people were disturbed about my Pierrot, but nevertheless I slept soundly that night. The next morning I learned that Gaston was out before daylight. When he returned, he said he had been again to the village and did not like affairs there. It was worse than the day before. The Countess, he said, had told the police through half of France. There was talk of men searching all the villages in the mountains.

"It is well if we leave," he said.

"Where can we go?" I said.

"The police can search the villages," said Gaston. "But they cannot search the mountains. Where do the wolves go when men are hunting them?"

"But we are not wolves," I said.

"No?" said Gaston in a voice I shall never forget. "I myself have felt like a wolf when men were after me. But the devil take their souls, I have given them many fine runs through these mountains and am ready for another."

"It might be better if I returned," I said.

"To the Count?" said Gaston.

"No," I said. "Not until Monsieur Jack Martin comes back."

Two days ago my Pierrot and I were with the world against Gaston Battaille, and within this brief time it came about that Pierrot and I were with Gaston against the world. It is very strange how such things happen, and if one has been through them, it gives one great pity for everyone and makes one slow to judge.

After breakfast Gaston bade me dress my Pierrot in his warmest clothes and to take what I needed for him and myself for two days.

"You will not find many things in this hotel where we are going," he said.

Gaston was as happy as a boy. I think he liked to do things like this. For him it was like a game. He put food into a knapsack, which he threw over his shoulder. He carried also a basket. To his Grandmother Battaille he said he was to take us home and might be away two or three nights.

"Have a care of yourself, my Gaston," she said.



I kissed Grandmother Battaille upon her cheeks and thanked her for what she had done for my Pierrot and then, with my baby in my arms, I followed Gaston out of the house.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

NO one saw us leave the village but it would not have mattered if they had, for no one here answered questions of strangers about Gaston Battaille. We continued along the mountain road for an hour and then left the road and took a path which brought us to a gorge between two great mountains. Here there was also a river, which ran so swiftly among the rocks that it was like boiling water. I had never seen anything like this and it was very beautiful. There were many pine-trees here and many birds. We went slowly, for there was no need of haste, and we stopped many times. Then we came to a little carpet of green near the river and Gaston spread the blanket upon the ground, and I placed Pierrot upon it and permitted him to play. He loved it here and tried to catch in his hands the shadows made by the trees on the ground. We watched him do this and laughed when he laughed.

Out here among the trees and rocks, with the blue sky overhead and the river singing to him as it hurried past, he was more beautiful than I had ever seen him. I shall never forget how he looked there. Gaston and I did not belong here, but as

for Pierrot, he was part of this wonderful picture like the birds. When Gaston and I spoke even in a whisper, it was as if we broke the calm of this place, but when Pierrot laughed aloud, his voice was so much in tune with the river and the wind in the pines and the other pleasant sounds that it was as if it were meant for him to grow here. He was like a fairy whose home was here. Even Gaston saw this and watched him, saying nothing.

Once a cuckoo lighted upon a branch over the head of my Pierrot and began to sing. Pierrot watched him for a moment and listened as hard as he could listen. Then he waved his arms and the cuckoo flew, but he flew only a little way to another branch and began again to sing. He did not see us, but only my Pierrot. Then Pierrot made a noise that was very like the song of that cuckoo, and you should have seen that bird look at him. He put his head first on one side and then on the other as if to learn what kind of a new cuckoo this was upon the ground. He sang again and listened while again my Pierrot mocked him. Then he flew nearer and Pierrot held out his hands as if to take him. When Pierrot did this, that bird was so surprised that Gaston could not keep from laughing out loud, which so frightened the bird that he flew away, scolding as hard as he could. If it had not been for Gaston, I am sure that bird would have come down to the ground and played with my Pierrot.



"It was you who frightened him away," I said, vexed that he had done so.

"Who could help laughing?" said Gaston. "That cuckoo was looking to find the wings of Pierrot. He will go home now and tell of this giant cuckoo without wings which he saw by the river. And no one will believe but will call him a liar. Pierrot has caused that bird to have a bad name forever."

"I am sorry if Pierrot has done that," I said.

"It is not our fault," said Gaston. "That bird did not mistake us for cuckoos."

"I have no doubt he mistook you with your laughing for a bear," I said.

This only made Gaston laugh the louder.

When we had thirst, we knelt by the bank of the river and drank of the cold water without cups. I held some in the hollow of my hand for Pierrot, but he did not like that and wished to do as we did.

"Here, let me take him," said Gaston.

So Gaston held him above the water, and Pierrot put in his hands and splashed as if he desired to swim.

"You see him!" said Gaston very much excited. "He would be a fish now. I believe if I dropped him in the water, he would swim."

"Have a care," I said, moving nearer that Gaston.

"He would be all things at once; a bird, a man, a fish," said Gaston.

While he was saying that, Pierrot reached lower and made such a splashing that he covered them both with water.

"Here," shouted Gaston, "I myself have no desire to swim."

Then Pierrot began to laugh as if that were the finest jest he had heard in all his life. I took him away from Gaston, fearing both of them would fall into the river. I wiped the face of my Pierrot and he did not like this. He threw back his head and turned it one side and tried to free himself from my arms. I placed him in the sun on his back so that his dress would dry. Then he made us laugh by trying to turn over upon his stomach. He was very strong for a baby so young. He rose to his elbow and twisted one leg over as far as it would go and struggled to raise himself higher so that he could roll over.

"He is like a man wrestling with himself," said Gaston. "I will wager you one franc that he wins."

Gaston with his arms over his knees watched that boy as if he were a champion. Twice Pierrot almost turned and then I saw Gaston raise his body with Pierrot as if to help him, but each time my Pierrot fell again upon his back.

"The next time he will do it," said Gaston as Pierrot paused to rest. It made my bones ache to see Pierrot try so hard and so I leaned forward to help him. Gaston placed his hand upon my arm.

"Tut, tut," he said. "That is not fair. You will lose your franc if you do that."

"I am willing to lose my franc," I said. "Pierrot is able to turn, but I do not like to see him struggle so hard."

"That is good for him," said Gaston. "He is waiting for his breath. You watch him this time."

Once more my Pierrot rose to his elbow and threw over his right leg. He paused in that position a moment and then with a mighty heave of his shoulders twisted and squirmed until, with a last great effort, he turned and fell full upon his face. Gaston clapped his hands and shouted: "Bravo, bravo"; while I knelt by the side of my Pierrot and patted his back.

"You are safe?" I said to Pierrot.

Pierrot raised his head and laughed and kicked the earth with his toes.

"You are a man from Yale," I said to my Pierrot. "I will tell Monsieur Jack Martin about this."

A marvellous thing about my Pierrot was that he was never idle. He was never content to sit and do nothing as many older people are. No sooner did he accomplish one thing than he began another. It would have tired a man full grown to have done everything my Pierrot did. When he was awake, his brown eyes were looking at everything about him; his little pink ears caught every sound; his arms and legs and body were always in motion. At the same time he studied everything



he did. If he only sat and made his fingers move, he studied to see which way they went and why they went and in how many different ways it was possible to make them go. He turned his hands this way and that. He moved first one finger and then another and then two fingers together and then three together and then all of them. After this he threw up his legs and examined those. He moved them to the right and to the left, up and down, and tried to put his toes in his mouth. If he had on no stockings, he would curl and uncurl those toes, watching always to see how they went as a man studies a machine. So it was with everything. It was as if he desired to learn all about himself—what he could do and what he could not do. I myself did many things without thinking, but my Pierrot did nothing without thinking. So he was very busy.

Gaston and I sat by the side of the river all the morning, watching my Pierrot as if he were a play upon the stage. Even after I fed my Pierrot and he slept in my arms, we watched him as he breathed. Gaston threw himself down upon his back in the sun in perfect content. It was possible to see by his face that he was content. As for me, I listened to the river and the birds and the wind in the pines and was so glad to have Pierrot at peace in my lap that I thought of nothing else. It did not matter why I had come here, what I was to do here, or what was to come of this. I would have been glad if Monsieur Jack Martin and Lucille were here also

because they would have liked this, but if they were not here, that did not matter either. As for the Count de Beauchamp or the men who searched for us, I did not give them two thoughts. It was as if we were in an enchanted kingdom where they could not come because they did not know the word that opened the gates. And that word was just "Pierrot."





## CHAPTER XXIX

WHEN we had hunger, Gaston gathered some fagots and made a fire by the side of the river. He had brought with him a pail and he hung this upon a stick over the flames and heated water. In this we boiled coffee, which with bread and cheese made our dinner. It was very good, and it made me see how simple it is to live if one has only a few things. A little bread, cheese, and coffee with a fire and a blanket, and I thought it was possible to live forever out here. There was no need here of the thousand things we thought necessary in the village.

It was in the middle of the afternoon that Gaston said to me:

"I must go now and see what those dogs who chase the wolves are doing."

"I do not understand why that is necessary," I said.

"That is because you do not understand those dogs," he said. "You are safe here and I will see if that American has returned."

"You know best," I said.

"You do not fear to be here alone?"



"I am never alone when I am with Pierrot," I said.

"I will leave Sport with you, and he will tell you when anyone comes. Then you can hide beneath the trees."

"Very well," I said. "But have a care yourself."

After he had gone, it seemed to me strange that I should be telling a thief and a robber to have a care of himself. Then I thought of poor Grandmother Battaille and how she was at home waiting for her brave grandson to return, and I prayed that no one would catch him. It was a great pity that Gaston was as he was. He was like Sport—a wild ogre of the village when every hand was against him, but a brave and good dog when people were kind to him.

All those hours I was alone here I was at peace. My Pierrot played and slept, and slept and played. Once that cuckoo returned as if to see again what manner of bird my Pierrot was. I wished to ask him what he had told those at home and what they had said to him and if it was true they had not believed. But that bird was like Pierrot and was not able to answer anything I asked of him. Sometimes I have thought that those things which cannot speak must be wiser than people who can speak because of necessity they must think more. They hear everything and say nothing, like a judge.

When the sun went behind the hills, I gathered

more fagots and put them upon the embers of the fire and made a warm blaze. Sitting beside this with the blanket over my shoulders, I was warm enough. My Pierrot liked to watch the flames. As they danced, he reached out for them. There was nothing with which my Pierrot did not wish to make friends because there was nothing which he feared. Now of course, while this might lead to danger, as, for example, it might lead him to place his hands in the fire, yet it was also beautiful. To live in a world which did not contain a single enemy either among the things of nature or among the things of man was to live in heaven. My Pierrot feared neither water nor fire, not great heights nor the forest nor the village, neither bird nor beast. If a great wolf had come upon us here, my Pierrot would have held out his arms to him ready to play. As long as I was with my Pierrot to guard him, it was wonderful to have him like this, and many times he made me laugh at my own fears. It seemed a pity that it was necessary to teach him that everything, even man, had within itself power for harm as well as good. Pierrot saw in this fire nothing but colour and movement and a pleasant crackling as of dancers in wooden shoes. It drove away the cold from him and when he was older it would warm his food for him. But my Pierrot must learn also that this pretty fire had the power to burn his fingers and destroy his house, and that this singing river could both quench his thirst and quench his life. It is pleasant for me to

remember that during all these months my Pierrot never knew such things. He knew nothing but the good and beautiful in this world. He lived on earth like an angel in heaven.

It was almost dark when Sport rose from before the fire with his ears raised and his nose turned down the mountainside. I watched him to see if it was a friend or an enemy which he heard. When he gave a little bark and wagged his tail and ran off into the trees, I knew it was Gaston who was returning. I was very glad to have Gaston come back. I placed more fagots upon the fire so that it would be warm for him here. But he was a long time in coming even after Sport heard him. When I saw him through the trees, I knew something had happened to him. I rose with Pierrot in my arms and went to meet him. In the twilight I could not see his face, but I saw that he walked with difficulty. As I came towards him, he straightened up, but he did not take three steps before he clutched a tree to keep from falling.

"What is it, Gaston?" I said.

"Nothing," he said. "Go back and sit by the fire."

"You are hurt?"

"It is nothing. They lamed the old grey wolf but they could not catch him."

As he came nearer the fire, I saw that his clothes were covered with dirt and that he dragged one leg behind him. Then I saw that this leg was tied with a handkerchief and that the handkerchief



was stained red. Gaston threw himself full length upon the ground and his face was white with pain. Yet all this time he spoke half in jest.

"It was an accident," he said. "That Tupin had his pistol in his hand. It went off when he was not looking and the ball struck me in the leg."

"You have been shot!" I said.

"It was not the fault of that Tupin," said Gaston. "If he had taken aim, I would have been safe."

I did not know what to do. With my Pierrot close to my breast I sat there not knowing what to do. After a minute Gaston sat up though it made him groan.

"Why should they shoot you?" I said.

"It was an accident, I tell you," he said. He spoke harshly now and did not look like the Gaston who a few hours before had left me. His face was harder, and he looked again like the man I had seen in the night in the Villa of Monsieur Jack Martin.

"I went into the bakeshop to borrow for a few days a loaf or two of bread and a bit of cheese," he said.

He drew from the pocket a loaf of bread and from another a piece of cheese.

"The devil take their souls," he said. "I have what I went after. A regiment of Tupins could not stop me."

"It was not right for them to shoot you for that," I said.

In spite of his pain Gaston smiled when I said that.

"They do not like to lend to Gaston Battaille—those rogues," he said. "Someone shouted thief and as I ran, Tupin fired! That is all. Fetch a pail of water and we will have dinner."

Then I understood that Gaston had stolen again. But he had not stolen for himself. He had stolen for my Pierrot and me. He had risked his life to get me bread. After he was wounded, he had come back all the way up the mountain to bring that bread to me. Whether what he did was right or wrong did not matter, he had done a very gallant thing. Not many men who are not thieves would have done such a thing as that. This brought me to my senses. I placed Pierrot by the side of Gaston.

"Here," I said. "Guard my son and I will bathe your leg."

"The leg does not matter," he said.

I took the pail and dipped it in the river. Then I returned to Gaston. The sight of that wound made me faint, but I put my lips together and removed the bandage. Then Gaston with his knife cut his trousers to the knee and I washed the wound. It was bleeding badly, but I knew that was as it should be. While I did this, Gaston played with my Pierrot as if he did not feel at all, and yet he must have been in great pain.

"Has that juckoo been here again?" he asked of Pierrot.

"Yes," I said for Pierrot.

Gaston laughed.

"He will have as brave a story to tell as Tupin," said Gaston.

"I do not like that Tupin," I said.

"Tut, tut," said Gaston. "You must not say that or he will have you in prison."

Like this Gaston talked and laughed, with his leg bleeding. I tore a long strip from my skirt and made a fresh bandage, which I bound about the wound. Then I tore another strip and tied it tight above the wound as I had seen Pierre do when he cut his arm. When I had done this, I covered his leg with the blanket and made hot coffee, using all the coffee which was left. This gave him warmth and eased his pain, but he was not content until I myself had eaten a morsel of bread and cheese though I did not have hunger. Then I thought what should be done next. It was not possible for Gaston to lie all night like this. So I said:

"Did you hear anything of Monsieur Jack Martin?"

Gaston laughed.

"I heard of nothing else," said Gaston. "He has sent a telegram to everyone in the town from Tupin to Lucille, saying that he comes to-night. He must have heard."

"How could he hear in Paris?" I said.

"He has only to read the newspapers."

"They have told about me in the papers?" I said.



"A hundred times and a hundred stories," he said.

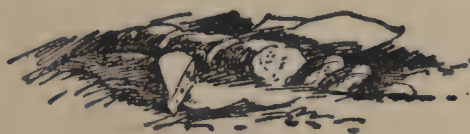
"But why should anyone care to hear about me?" I said.

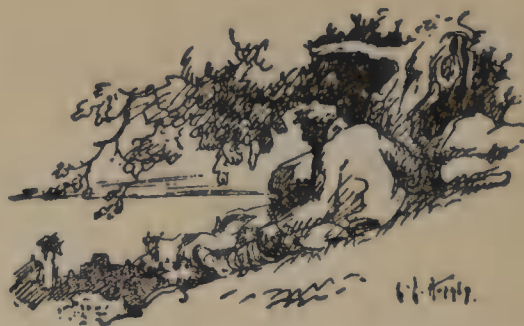
"You have been stolen and you have been killed and you have been lost in a hundred different ways," said Gaston. "You are famous—you and Pierrot, and Tupin who tells a different story every day how it was done."

"I do not like Monsieur Jack Martin to hear such things," I said.

"Do not worry," said Gaston. "I told Lucille you were safe and told her to tell Monsieur Jack Martin, when he came, that you would be back in the morning."

"Gaston," I said. "I shall be back to-night. I must ask Monsieur Jack Martin to bring Doctor Jambeau to you."





## CHAPTER XXX

GASTON talked and talked and talked and said it was not possible for me to go down the mountain in the dark and that it was not safe to carry Pierrot in the dark and that his wound was nothing and that he had no pain. When he saw I was not to be changed, he said that I did not know the path and he would not tell me the path.

"Very well," I said. "At least I can search for the path."

"You are mad," he said. "You would be lost in five minutes."

"If you do not tell me how to go, then I shall be lost," I said.

Then he tried something else. He said that if I brought Doctor Jambeau up here, all the village would follow and then he would be put into prison.

"I do not know Monsieur Jack Martin if he permits that," I said.

"That American cares nothing for me," said Gaston.

"He cares for every gallant gentleman," I said. "You have shown yourself a hundred times to be that, Gaston."

"I have done nothing," he said.

"When you say that, you show yourself to be still more a gallant gentleman," I said. "My mind is fixed."

I rose and took Pierrot in my arms.

"Very well," he said. "Then I go also."

"No, no, no," I said. "You must not walk upon that leg."

"You must not go alone."

"I beg of you," I said as he rose to his feet.

I started towards the trees as if to leave him, but he said nothing and followed behind as best he could.

"Oh!" I said. "It is cruel to yourself and cruel to me for you to do like this."

"Turn to the right," was all that Gaston said.

Now though it made my heart bleed to see him try to walk, I knew that between the two things—remaining here all night or reaching Doctor Jambeau—it was better for him to come. Of course it would have been yet better for him to rest where he was and permit me to send Doctor Jambeau to him, but that he would not do. So I wasted no more strength in talk. Gaston would not permit me even to give my arm. But I found a stout stick for him and we went slowly, stopping to rest many times.

Now all that distance Gaston Battaille went without a single cry of pain. Except to open his lips and tell me to go this way or that way, he said nothing. It was very dark, but he knew the path



as if it were the day. He told me in advance to guard against that rock or to have a care where it was steep or to walk without fear when the path was safe. If I asked how it went with him, he said only:

“Well enough. Hold that Pierrot tight.”

That Pierrot slept as if in his bed. It did not matter to him how rough the path or what the danger. There were many times when we walked along the edge of great heights where one faulty step would have carried us to our death, but he with both arms about my neck breathed as easily as if he were at home. I felt his breath upon my neck and it was like the breath of an angel. It gave me the strength to bear his weight in my arms; it gave my feet sureness. It is true that at times my arms became without feeling, but after resting a minute I was ready to go on again. Without him I could not have walked that distance in the dark. Without him I would have fallen twenty times. But with him I could have walked forever. It was as if he were a big man and walked by my side, permitting me to lean upon his arm. Just his arms about my neck and his breath against my skin did that. If I faltered, I had only to kiss his hair and I was strong once more.

Another thing I knew and it was this: that because of this walk in the dark he was more than ever my own Pierrot. The more I dared for him, the more I risked for him, the more I did for him,

the more he became one with me. That is something no one understands unless they have borne. This is the pay which mothers receive. That is the reason why those mothers who suffer most are most content because they are given most of love in return. It made me see why it was the Countess had such great love for her baby who had gone. From the first moment he came, that baby had caused his mother pain because of his weakness. He had given her no rest either day or night but had kept her poor heart bleeding and had torn her mind with anguish of fear. But at the same time that baby had brought to her so great a love that it had made her into a different woman and had given her the strength to endure. After he had gone, that love remained. I saw this now and it made me forgive her many things.

If my Pierrot had remained always in his cradle and given me no trouble, I would have loved him with all the love I had. I would have thought I loved him with all the love it was possible for me to give. But walking along this path in the dark with him in my arms and his life depending upon my steadiness and my body bearing the weight of his, my heart was made bigger, so that I was able to love a hundred times more. And I do not think that a heart which is once stretched big with love, ever shrinks again. It is still there to give added joy in the times of peace which follow. My heart to-day has more love to comfort me because of that walk. Sometimes I think I am more thank-

ful for the hours of hardship which my Pierrot gave me and which permitted me to give him so much of myself than I am for the hours of peace when I was able to give out little.

With thoughts like these I did not know whether we walked one hour or two hours. Poor Gaston followed behind without a word, without a groan, and what he thought I do not know. It was a great pity he did not have a son to carry in his arms. If I had permitted it, I do not doubt but what he would have tried to carry my Pierrot, but that would have been different because Pierrot was not his son. If it had been another's son I was carrying, I would have done my best and would have loved that boy for his weakness, but I do not think I would have had the strength to go so far.

At a turn in the path we saw at no great distance below us the lights of the village and beyond those the blue sea. It was only a short time that I had been away from the sea but as I saw it now, it looked to me like more of an old friend than the village itself. I listened and heard the little waves roll up on the shore and the sound was like a greeting.

"We are almost home now," I said to Gaston.  
"I hear the waves."

"Good," said Gaston.

He threw himself upon his back like a dead man. His arms were stretched out and there seemed no more life left in him. I had fear when I saw this.





*The great Cornice road*



"Gaston," I said. "Go no farther. In an hour I will have Monsieur Jack Martin here with the doctor."

"Then it would be necessary for you to return to show them the path," he said.

"I can do that," I said.

"When you are ready to start, tell me," he said.

In a few minutes I rose to go on again. Then he rose also and nothing I said would stop him though he swayed upon his feet like a tree in the wind. We went down the hill and near the end Gaston was more upon his hands and knees than upon his feet. It was terrible. That is a picture I do not like to think about. When we were within a short distance of the great Cornice road, which runs through the village, I stopped again.

"Listen," I said. "You can walk no farther or you will be dead."

"What matters that?" he said.

"It matters to me," I said. "And if you will not remain here and permit me to go on alone, then I remain here with you."

I saw that even now it did little good to talk to him. I do not know how this would have ended if it had not been for Sport. He came to me and kissed my hand and then he went to Gaston and kissed his hand. It was as if he wished to give us courage. Then with a bark he ran off down the road. I knew what he was about and knew that if Monsieur Jack Martin was at the villa, Sport would bring him back.



## CHAPTER XXXI

IN less than one hour I heard the bark of Sport and then the sound of a man running. I pushed through the bushes and stood in the road. Then, as Sport leaped upon me to kiss my hand, I saw the form of a man. It was Monsieur Jack Martin, who had run at the heels of Sport, with Jimmee and his automobile following behind him. Monsieur Jack Martin rushed to my side and said:

"Is anything wrong with that Pierrot?"

"No," I said. "He is asleep in my arms."

"Give him to me," he commanded.

I gave him Pierrot and he looked down into his face as if he did not believe. Then he looked up at me.

"What the devil is the meaning of all this?" he said.

"Gaston Battaille lies under the trees very weak," I said.

"That thief Battaille!" said Monsieur Jack Martin. "Then it was that man who stole Pierrot for a ransom?"

Monsieur Jack Martin handed Pierrot to me and with his fists doubled started towards Gaston.

"No! No!" I said. "It was Gaston who saved

me! He is almost dead. You must bring Doctor Jambeau to him at once."

"What do you mean?" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"I will tell you all later," I said. "But now be good to him, Monsieur Jack Martin. Do not let Monsieur Tupin know. If you could take him home——"

"Where is he?" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

So I led Monsieur Jack Martin to the bushes where Gaston lay. And Gaston was upon his back white and silent with his eyes closed.

"*Mon Dieu*, he is dead!" I said.

Monsieur Jack Martin gave one look at him and then called to Jimmee. The two men took Gaston in their arms and carried him to the automobile and placed him on the seat, and he did not move. Then Monsieur Jack Martin took a seat beside Jimmee and we went back to the villa so fast I could not see. When we were there, Monsieur Jack Martin and Jimmee carried Gaston into the house and put him on the floor. Then Jimmee ran to the automobile and went to find Doctor Jambeau.

"Is he dead?" I said to Monsieur Jack Martin.

"I do not know," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"How did he come like this?"

Then, as well as I was able with my throat aching, I held my Pierrot and told Monsieur Jack Martin all that Gaston had done.

"By God!" said Monsieur Jack Martin. "Thief or no thief, that fellow is a man."

"You will be good to him and not send him to prison?" I said.

"He is safe here," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"I knew that," I said. "Now if only he will live!"

We heard the sound of the automobile, which in the night sounded like the noise of a hundred pistols, and in another minute Doctor Jambeau came running into the room.

"What is this?" he said.

Then he saw me with Pierrot in my arms.

"You both are all right?"

"Gaston!" I said, pointing to him on the floor.

He gave one look at him and said:

"So for once Tupin told the truth."

"Tupin never tells the truth," I said. "Please save Gaston, Doctor Jambeau."

He knelt by the side of Gaston and felt at his wrist. Then he pricked his arm with a needle and in a few moments Gaston opened his eyes. But when he saw all those men around him, he struggled to rise as if to run. Then I bent over him and said:

"Quiet, Gaston. You are safe here with Monsieur Jack Martin."

They carried Gaston up the stairs and placed him in bed. Then I do not know what happened but while they were gone, I undressed my Pierrot and placed him in his bed. He woke a little and looked about him but as soon as I covered him, he ~~was~~ asleep again. Then I went downstairs and



waited. It was an hour before Monsieur Jack Martin returned with Doctor Jambeau. I said:

"He will live?"

"He has a chance," said Doctor Jambeau.

"But where have you been these three days?"

Then it was necessary for me to tell from the beginning how I left the house and what I had done.

"You thought the Count meant to steal your Pierrot?" said Doctor Jambeau.

"I did not know," I said.

"That Count should be kicked from here to Jericho," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"Tut, tut," said Doctor Jambeau. "You do not understand. He meant no harm. Neither he nor the Countess have slept since this little disturber of the peace turned the village upside-down. As for the Countess, she is ill in bed. I must go to her at once."

"Just a minute," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"It is better if you say nothing of that man upstairs."

"He should be in prison—that man," said Doctor Jambeau.

"Will you promise?" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"It is not necessary," he said. "The secrets of my patients are not my own."

"When you hear his story, I think you will change your mind about Battaille," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

Now after Doctor Jambeau had gone, I told Monsieur Jack Martin about one thing which I did not like to tell. I told him how Gaston had robbed his house.

"But everything is at his home," I said as I saw the face of Monsieur Jack Martin grow dark. "He gave everything to me to return to you, but I did not bring the bundle."

"When was this he gave back those things?" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"On the next morning," I said. "It was Pierrot made him do that."

"Pierrot?"

"He was not able to play with Pierrot when he was a thief," I said.

Then Monsieur Jack Martin said this:

"If he did that, I guess he is not all bad."

Then he thought a moment and said:

"And he came down the mountain with you and Pierrot with a leg like his! Now that yellow dog of a Tupin shall not have this fellow if he comes here with the army of France at his heels!"

## CHAPTER XXXII

IN the morning, as soon as I dressed, I went in to see how it went with Gaston. He had slept little and was very weak, but he was alive, which was enough to make me very glad. The first thing he said was this:

"That Pierrot is well?"

"Pierrot?" I said. "It was not Pierrot who was shot in the leg."

"He is so little and the walk was so long for him," said Gaston.

"He cared no more about that walk than if he had been in his bed all the time," I said.

Then the next thing Gaston said was this:

"I must get back home to-day."

"You will be lucky if you are able to leave that bed in a month," I said.

His face grew dark at this and he said again:

"To-day. My grandmother is waiting."

Now I must confess that I myself had thought not at all of Grandmother Battaille, even though she had been so good to me. But here was Gaston upon his back and in pain, thinking of no one else. If there had been no one to hold him, I believe he would have tried to crawl



from his bed and go up the mountain alone and without help.

"Gaston," I said, "it is sure you cannot move, but it is sure Grandmother Battaille must not be left alone to wait. I will ask Monsieur Jack Martin about that."

"There is no need of asking anyone," he said.

"Rest quiet," I said. "I must go below now and prepare breakfast for Monsieur Jack Martin and make some broth for you."

When I came into the kitchen and began my work again, it was as if I had not been gone at all. This was because Monsieur Jack Martin was in the house. Without him this Villa was only so many walls like a prison, but with him upstairs in his room it was like home. For one thing it was not possible not to feel safe with him within reach. I had fear of no one. The Count de Beauchamp might come with twenty notaries and it would make no difference, and Tupin might come with the whole army of France at his back, as Monsieur Jack Martin had said, and I would not fear for Gaston. Part of this was because Monsieur Jack Martin was an American, and everyone knows that an American is able to do anything and is in fear of no one. But part of it also was because of Monsieur Jack Martin himself. He was so big and strong and gentle that it was possible to leave every matter for him to care for.

As I have said, I was no more back in my kitchen than I forgot everything about these last

three days. But it was not so with other people. Lucille came to the house before Monsieur Jack Martin was awake and when she saw me, began to cry and cry and cry.

"What is the matter?" I said to her.

She was very pale.

"I feared I should never see you again," she said. "And Pierrot?"

"Is sleeping in his bed," I said. "*Ma foi*, he has not missed an hour of sleep since he went away."

"But why did you go like that? Why did you not take me?"

I had no more than begun to tell her before there was a light rap upon the door and there stood Jean. He too was white and he too began to cry.

"Where is Pierrot?" he said.

After that who should come but Madame Lacroix. It was necessary to hide Jean, and as soon as she came in, she said:

"Where is that Pierrot?"

"In his bed asleep," I said.

"I hope this has taught you a lesson," she said.

"Why should it teach me a lesson?"

"Bah! did I not tell you that Amercian would steal that infant—eh?"

"But Monsieur Jack Martin did not steal that infant," I said.

"Then where were you?" she said.

Now I was about to tell her everything, as I had

told Lucille, when I thought about Gaston. So I stopped myself and said only:

"I went away to visit until Monsieur Jack Martin returned."

"Where did you visit?" she said.

"In the mountains."

"Who do you know in the mountains?"

There was no reason why she should ask such questions. I became very red in the face.

"I can tell you no more," I said.

"Your face shows how much truth there is in what you have told already," said Madame Lacroix.

"I have much to do, Madame," I said.

"When can I see that Pierrot?"

"I will let you know," I said.

So she went away and I knew how much gossip she would make of this, but I could do nothing.

After she had gone, there came three strange men who said they were from the newspapers, and began to ask many questions. I did not know what to say to them when Monsieur Jack Martin himself came down.

"What do you wish here?" he said as soon as he saw them. Then they began to ask questions of him and said they desired to have photographs of Pierrot and myself.

"Look here," he said to them. "This is none of your business. Cannot a woman and her child go away for a visit of three days without having



you men write such nonsense as you have been writing?"

"Is it true she was held by bandits for a ransom?" one of them said.

"You are the true bandits," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "You so frightened her with your stories that she did not dare tell where she was."

"But Monsieur Tupin says——"

"Tell me no more what that dog says," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "He will tell a different story after I have seen him. And if you yourselves do not tell a different story, I will duck you all three in the ocean and wash out of you some of that dirty ink."

They had fear of him and started away with their faces dark when he followed them a little distance as if to strike them. Then I saw him put his hand in his pocket and give them money, so that when they departed, they were smiling and bowing to him. But when he came back to the house, he said to me:

"Bah! If only Tupin would turn his pistol upon those robbers, he would deserve a medal of leather. If another one comes, do not speak a word to him but send him to me at once."

"Very well, Monsieur," I said.

"How is that young mountain climber this morning?"

"He sleeps," I said. "But there is something about Gaston I wish to tell you."

"I forgot all about him," he said. "Is he alive?"

"Yes, Monsieur, but he desires to go home."

Then I told Monsieur Jack Martin about Grandmother Battaille and how she thought Gaston was a brave *gendarme* here in the village. I thought he would never finish laughing. Then he said:

"But that is a good idea. Why is he not made a *gendarme*? They say in my country, 'Set a thief to catch a thief.'"

"I do not think Gaston means to be a thief any more," I said. "And you must not forget that Grandmother Battaille knows nothing of that."

Then I told him how old she was and how she had preserved all the clothes of Gaston since he was a baby like Pierrot and how she gave them to me for Pierrot. Then he did not laugh but turned away his eyes, and if it had been any other man, I would have said there were tears in those eyes.

"Poor old lady," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "I suppose it is true she loves this rascal."

"She is very proud of him," I said. "And he is very good to her."

"Then," said Monsieur Jack Martin, "we must have her down here. She may have my bed and I will sleep upon the floor."

"You—upon the floor?" I said.

"Why not? I have slept upon the ground many nights and a floor is no harder and much drier. I will have Jimmee go up and get her to-day."

Of course it was not necessary for Monsieur

Jack Martin to sleep upon the floor because we bought a little bed at the village, but he did not think of this until I told him. That night Grandmother Battaille slept in the house of Monsieur Jack Martin, but Jimmee said to get her was the hardest work of a day that he had ever done. He said that half the distance he carried her in his arms. And he said he never hoped to reach heaven now because of the lies he told her on the road.



## CHAPTER XXXIII

IT was this same day, but before Grandmother Battaille arrived, that the Count de Beauchamp came to the house. He came with Doctor Jambeau. I was in the kitchen, with my Pierrot in his basket beside me, when I heard his voice. I seized my Pierrot and held him in my arms because, although I had had no fear until now, it was different when he was in the house. Monsieur Jack Martin went to the door and I heard Doctor Jambeau present to him the Count de Beauchamp.

"My wife would not rest until I had come here and seen for myself that Pierrot was safe," said the Count.

"Would she not take the word of Jambeau for that?" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"The Countess is not herself," said Doctor Jambeau. "She has not yet recovered from the loss of her own little boy."

"I forgot that," said Monsieur Jack Martin in a more gentle voice. "Pardon me."

"I fear I was responsible for the disappearance of this woman and her child," said the Count de Beauchamp. "But I beg you to believe that I was innocent of any intent to frighten her."

"I do not know what your intentions were," said Monsieur Jack Martin, "but it is certain that you frightened her."

Then Doctor Jambeau spoke again.

"The Count, at the time he spoke to the mother of Pierrot was thinking only of his wife—which is natural," he said. "She has a great passion for this Pierrot. Her heart is empty and she thought Pierrot would fill it."

"I have no doubt he would," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"And the Count, with nothing in his mind but to bring his wife comfort, suggested to the mother of Pierrot that—that——"

"She sell her child," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"You do not put it very delicately," said Doctor Jambeau.

And the Count de Beauchamp said: "I assure you our plan was to adopt the child."

With my Pierrot in my arms I stood ready to run once more. Yes, even with Monsieur Jack Martin there, I was ready to run back into the mountains when I heard this talk. My skin was first hot and then cold, and I breathed as if I were running. It did not seem to me right that these three men should talk like this of my Pierrot as if he were a lamb to be sold to the market. And all this while my Pierrot was reaching for my hair with his little hands and laughing and burying his warm face in my neck and then again reaching for my hair. He knew nothing of what these men

said and for that matter neither does the lamb who nibbles at the grass while his master bargains with the butcher.

"I told her I would treat this Pierrot as if he were my own child," said the Count. "I would make a gentleman of him and give him education—travel."

"I understand," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"It is not uncommon for children to be adopted like that in France," said Doctor Jambeau. "I am not saying that in this case such a thing was possible, only I wish you to understand the attitude of the Count."

"Good God!" said Monsieur Jack Martin. "It is not difficult to understand that. He needs a child and so he goes out to buy one. I do not blame him for that. If there are children on the market, he has a right to buy them if he can. The mistake he made was in trying to buy Pierrot. And now, so there may be no future misunderstanding, let me tell him this: first, that Pierrot is not on the market; second, that if ever he comes on the market, I wish to bid myself. And I promise the Count it will be necessary for him to bid high."

"Pardon me, Monsieur," said the Count. "I did not know you had such an interest in this child."

Then I heard Monsieur Jack Martin speak in a voice that made me tremble because I knew how he looked when he spoke, though I could not see his face. He said this:



"Do you mean anything more than you say?"

It was Doctor Jambeau who answered.

"Tut, tut," he said with a laugh. "You Americans are always looking for a signal of war. The Count——"

"Do you mean anything more than you say?" said Monsieur Jack Martin again.

"I meant no more than I said," said the Count de Beauchamp. "But I beg to assure you, Monsieur Martin, that you are at liberty to interpret what I said in any way you wish and I shall be at your service."

"You are like two children," said Doctor Jambeau. "I will have no more of this nonsense. Here, where is that rascal Pierrot? I have not the time to listen more but I told the Countess that the Count should see this Pierrot and make sure he was alive and so he shall. The woman is sick—do you understand, my children?"

I heard Doctor Jambeau as he came towards the kitchen, and I began to kiss the hair of my Pierrot.

"Here," he said. "Give me that boy a moment."

"You will not give him to the Count?" I said, holding Pierrot tight.

"Bah!" he said. "Here is still another child! Pierrot has more sense than any of you. See—he holds out his arms."

Doctor Jambeau took my Pierrot and went into the other room with him. "Here is this rascal," I heard him say. "*Ma foi*, I bring into

the world every year some hundred infants. They are as much alike as a hundred pebbles upon the sea-shore, and yet every mother expects me to tell her that never before have I seen an infant like her infant."

"Give him to me," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

Then I do not know what my Pierrot did but in a minute everyone of those men was laughing.

"It is your stick he wishes, Count," I heard Monsieur Jack Martin say. "Give him your stick."

Then they laughed again and Monsieur Jack Martin called to me to bring a bottle of wine. When I went in with the wine and glasses, there was Pierrot on the floor and all three men gathered about him. Pierrot had the stick in his hand and was trying to thrust the gold handle in his mouth, having much trouble to find his mouth.

"If ever he finds that mouth, you will lose your stick, Count," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"He is learning to fence," said the Count de Beauchamp.

"Not at all," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "He thinks that is a baseball bat. He will be captain of the nine at Yale."

"I do not understand that baseball," said the Count.

"That is the trouble with France," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "If you fellows could only learn to play baseball, then you would become a great nation."

There was much more talk and then the three men filled their glasses and drank to Pierrot. Then they filled their glasses again and while I turned very red, they drank, "To the mother of Pierrot." And I made a bow to the gentlemen and thanked them.





## CHAPTER XXXIV

NOW although Gaston was very glad to see his grandmother, it was Pierrot that he wished most to see while he lay in bed. Of all the people in the house it was my Pierrot who brought Gaston most comfort. Gaston had fear of I do not know what with Monsieur Jack Martin. As for his grandmother, she talked to him only of the fear of death. For me he did not care either one way or the other. Lucille he liked well enough, only he said she made him think too much of his sins. Pierrot made him think of his sins also, but in a different way. Lucille made him think of the past and Pierrot made him think only of the present. Lucille made him feel that he should pray to be forgiven for what he had done already, while Pierrot asked only that he be honest now and in the days to come. That is what Gaston told me.

Pierrot demanded of a man only that he have an honest heart. He forgave everything if underneath everything the heart was clean. It was well possible for anyone to make a mistake, but so long as a man could look him straight in the eye and resolve to do better, that was enough.

So for an hour in the morning and for an hour at night I carried my Pierrot to Gaston and placed him on the bed. Then you should have heard those two. They were like children together. First you would hear Gaston laugh and then you would hear Pierrot laugh and then you would hear them both laugh at once. No matter in how much pain Gaston was, this always happened. And Gaston talked to Pierrot as if Pierrot were a boy grown up who could understand. He told Pierrot stories. One day I heard him speak like this:

“You remember that cuckoo you saw by the river? Eh—of course you do. Yes, that cuckoo with the black and white feathers who looked at you. Yes—that is the one. Well, that cuckoo after looking at you flew away. You remember—like this.”

Then I heard Pierrot laugh as Gaston showed him how that cuckoo flew away. And I think my Pierrot must have tried to do the same thing with his hands, for Gaston said:

“Yes—like that. Over the trees he went and to the top of the mountain where his brothers live. You say you have never been to the top of the mountain? Well, when you are big enough, I will take you there. I will show you a hole under the rocks where the wolves live. I will show you the nest of a nightingale, and there are not many who have seen that. Eh—take you now, you say? As soon as I am able to walk, I will ask your mother.

"Well, that cuckoo, he said to his brothers like this, 'Here, come with me and I will show you a giant cuckoo without wings down by the river. He has four feet and he rolls upon the ground.' How did he talk, you ask? Like this."

Then Gaston made a funny noise with his mouth like a cuckoo talking, and Pierrot laughed and laughed at this.

"But what do you think?" said Gaston. "The brothers of that cuckoo would not believe. They said: 'That is another Tupin story—that.' But the cuckoo told it over again and still they would not believe, and in the end he did not believe himself. So he flew away to go back and look again. It was like this he flew."

He showed Pierrot how that cuckoo flew and Pierrot tried to do as Gaston did, for I heard Gaston say:

"Yes—like that. But have a care how you do that or you too will fly. So that cuckoo came back and looked once more and there upon the ground was that same giant cuckoo without wings and with four feet. Then Monsieur cuckoo flew once again to the top of the mountain like this. When he was at home, he said to his brothers: 'It is there. Come with me and see it.' But his brothers would not come. They thought their brother was making a jest and so out they flew and began to scratch from this cuckoo all his feathers. Like this."

Pierrot now laughed so hard that he began to



hiccough. As for me, I wondered if it were true my Pierrot had begun to talk, and so I went in. And there sat Pierrot, making his hands go like the wings of a bird. But he could not talk at all and had said nothing all this while to Gaston.

"You must not make him laugh so much," I said.

"Make him laugh?" said Gaston. "It is Pierrot who has made me laugh until I cannot see."

Then Pierrot reached for his beard and began to pull it and then looked up at me as if to make sure I saw.

"Tut, tut," I said. "You must not be rough, my son."

"In another day I will have no hair left on my face," said Gaston.

"Do you wish me to take him now?" I said.

"No, no," said Gaston, quickly. "Do not take him now."

So I went out and left them together again.

My Pierrot was able to play with anyone—an old man or a young man, an old woman or a young woman, a count or a postman, a countess or the wife of a postman. Now this seemed to me a very fine thing. Monsieur Jack Martin was like this. There are some people who think that to be like a king it is necessary to choose with care among people, but to me it seems to be more like a king to be able to play with everyone, demanding only that they have good hearts. The great men are not those loved only by a few but those who are

loved by many. This was the way with Pierrot. Old people forgot their years and became young again with him, while young people, when with Pierrot, forgot they had any years at all and were like little children again. It made no difference with Pierrot if they were men or women, though sometimes I thought he liked men best because they were strong. And yet there was Lucille, who was very weak, and Pierrot loved her. But least of all did Pierrot care whether or not they were noble. I should think that to have an infant in a palace, it would be very hard to keep from laughing. They know so very little about such matters.

Sometimes, when I thought of what the Count had desired me to do, I wondered about this. Even if my Pierrot were a little count, I do not understand how he would have been any different. And if Gaston had been a big count, I do not think that would have any difference, either with Gaston or my Pierrot when they played together. Before my Pierrot came, I thought all noble people and great people were different from everyone else. I was in fear of them as if they were angels. But since Pierrot came, I did not think the same. I asked only if they had good hearts. That was the way my Pierrot did and that was the way Monsieur Jack Martin did. It was because of her heart that Monsieur Jack Martin liked Grandmother Battaille so much.

From the beginning, Monsieur Jack Martin

was very good to this old lady. When she first came into the house, she had fear to open her mouth or to look Monsieur Jack Martin in the face. She folded her hands before her and looked upon the ground when he spoke to her. But Monsieur Jack Martin was very gentle and for the first day or two permitted her to become accustomed to the house. He said to her only "Good-morning, grandmother," or "Good-day, grandmother," or "I hope you are well to-day, grandmother." After this he talked to her a few words about her grandson when he passed her.

"He is much better to-day—that boy—eh, grandmother?"

Then she gained courage to say in a whisper:

"Yes, Monsieur."

After this he began to talk more about Gaston until, before she knew what she was doing, Grandmother Battaille was telling him as much about her grandson as she had told me. This was because he listened with such interest. To see him with his head bent towards her and nodding and only speaking a word when she stopped, you would have thought it was to some great lady he was listening.





## CHAPTER XXXV

ONE morning Monsieur Jack Martin came to me and said: "How old is this Pierrot anyway?"

"He is six months old to-morrow," I said.

"I thought so," he said. "Then he must have a birthday party. My faith, what have we been thinking of?"

"But a birthday party is not given until an infant is one year old," I said.

"Why not?" he said.

Monsieur Jack Martin had a way of asking questions like that, which no one could answer.

"I do not know," I said. "It is the custom."

"Who made the custom?" he said.

"I do not know," I said.

"You do not know. I do not know. No one knows. You have no authority. To the devil with such customs. We will begin a new custom. Every month Pierrot must have a birthday party."

"Very well, Monsieur," I said.

"The life of Pierrot should be measured by months, not by years. In truth it should be measured by days. He should have a party every day."

"That would be impossible, Monsieur," I said.

"Nothing is impossible," he said. "However, we will begin with to-morrow. It is something to celebrate to have lived six months in a new world. Think of all Pierrot has accomplished since he came here as an immigrant. He arrived without clothes to his back, without a sou in his pocket, without knowing a word of our language. His wings were taken from him and he was put down here, not knowing even how to walk, how to move his hands, how to smile, how to do anything. He was even without hair and teeth and ordered to grow them if he wished them. He was without friends——"

"Pardon me, Monsieur, there was you."

"But he did not know me until after he came, did he?" said Monsieur Jack Martin. "It was necessary for him to introduce himself. The lad did not have even a relative——"

"Pardon me again," I said. "My Pierrot had his mother."

"Not until after he came," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "What did he know about you or you about him at the beginning? You might have been a queen or a beggar of the streets for all Pierrot knew. As for all you knew, Pierrot might have been a girl or a weakling boy or anyone except Pierrot. You were strangers to one another."

"I do not think that, Monsieur," I said.

"Think it or not, it is the truth," said Monsieur

Jack Martin. "You did not know even the colour of his eyes. You did not know his name. You knew nothing about him. As for him, he knew even less. He was stripped to his naked hide and sent off into a far country and told to make his way with the aid of nothing but his little, beating heart. What wonder that many of them fail as the young count failed."

"Oh, my poor Pierrot!" I said.

"People do not think of those things at all," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "They suppose it is an easy matter to be an infant."

"It takes courage," I said.

"You bet your last dollar it does," he says. "It takes more courage than most men have. Most men lose that courage after they are men. So I say this Pierrot has much to celebrate."

"You are right, Monsieur," I said.

"In six months he has made a wonderful little mother and many friends. We will have them all here to-morrow. Do you know how to make a birthday cake?"

"Yes, Monsieur," I said.

"Then make the best cake you know how to make. I will order other things to-day at the village."

But before I went into the kitchen, I went upstairs to my Pierrot where he slept, and I knelt by his bed and thanked the good Lord that he had helped Pierrot to a safe journey. Then I kissed my Pierrot many times lightly upon the hair and



looked at him in more wonder than ever before. If I had thought of him until now as a great general there was nothing this minute brave enough with which to compare him. A general is a man with training and with much knowledge of life and he has many other men to help him and knows where he is going and what he is to find. But my Pierrot had none of those things—not even clothes for his back as Monsieur Jack Martin had said. Yet he marched bravely through the dark to this new world and took up his work all alone. I had been able to do no more than give him food and clothes as I might to a beggar. To think what my Pierrot had done, brought the tears to my eyes. I could not keep myself from crying. I thought of the many things that might have happened before he came. He might have lost himself before he found me. And after he came, if he had not had great courage, he might have gone back.

“Dear God,” I prayed, “continue to give my Pierrot great courage as you have done already. Keep him strong and happy. And give me knowledge how to help him. Permit me to endure for him all that is possible. He is weak and I am strong, and so please take from his shoulders and put upon mine. I am ready to suffer anything, dear God, that will help my Pierrot.”

So I prayed and so I have prayed many times since then. It is so easy for a mother to be selfish when she does not think of such things as Monsieur Jack Martin told me of. I know that I myself

thought often of the joy my Pierrot gave to me instead of considering the joy I might bring to Pierrot, who was the one who needed help. It is not the children who are for us; it is we who are for the children. That is the great thing to remember. I ask pity of the good God if sometimes I forgot this and, what is worse, if sometimes I tried to forget this. But when my Pierrot so filled my heart with gladness, it was difficult not to think this was the important thing. I was for Pierrot and Pierrot was not for me. He had come into a new world, and I and all the others were here to help him. That is what Monsieur Jack Martin made me see.

I went downstairs to make the cake for my Pierrot. Monsieur Jack Martin told me to be sure to have it large enough, and so I chose the largest dish I had in which to bake it. I made it rich with eggs and sugar and butter because Monsieur Jack Martin liked his cake like that. When it was baked, I put upon it a white frosting. Then I made a frosting of chocolate and with that made a border and also with that wrote across the top "Pierrot." It was very beautiful and when I had done, I took it up to show to Gaston.

"Good," said Gaston.

"It is a great pity that you yourself cannot come to the party," I said.

"If I see the cake and see Pierrot, that is enough," he said.

"And you shall have some of the cake to eat," I said.

When I came downstairs, Monsieur Jack Martin had returned and he had brought with him six little candles and many confections, and some rare wine and tobacco for the gentlemen.

"I have seen Lucille and Madame Lacroix and Jean and Antonin and Jambeau and Beauchamp and his wife," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"Surely," I said, "the noble Count and Countess would not come with Antonin and Jean."

"Why not?" said Monsieur Jack Martin. "This is a party for Pierrot and the friends of Pierrot."

"Well," I said, not believing, "we shall see."

"Also there are two or three friends of mine I found at the hotel who wish to meet Pierrot. Put the candles on the cake, for they will come at three o'clock."

"There should be but half a candle on the cake," I said.

"There should be six candles on the cake," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

So I arranged the six candles in a circle upon the cake, but it did not seem to me right. But it was not possible to change Monsieur Jack Martin. I have thought sometimes that if he had told me my Pierrot was six years old instead of six months, I would have seen no other way but to believe.

Grandmother Battaille helped me to clean the big dining-room and prepare the table for the



guests. She was very much excited and continued to say:

"It is not fitting that I should come to this party."

When Monsieur Jack Martin heard that, he put his arm over her shoulder and said:

"Say no more, grandmother. Before the afternoon is over, I expect you to be the youngest of us all."

Monsieur Jack Martin in his way tried also to help but everything he did, it was necessary to do again. For example, when he swept the floor, he did very well until the end when he swept everything into the closet and shut the door. When I saw that, I was longer in cleaning that closet than I would have been in sweeping the floor. It was not until Pierrot awoke and was washed and dressed that Monsieur Jack Martin was of any service. Then I gave him my son to care for and so he became useful, though even then it was necessary to watch him lest he permit Pierrot to play upon the floor and soil his clean dress.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

LUCILLE was the first to come and after her came Jean and Antonin and then two friends of Monsieur Jack Martin. These were Monsieur Moulton, a notary from America, and Monsieur Dick Cardington, a man from Yale. To him Monsieur Jack Martin said when he showed him my Pierrot:

"Here is the man who some day is going to eat up Harvard, Dick."

"Good arm there, Jack."

Then my Pierrot reached for the mustache of Monsieur Cardington, and Monsieur Moulton laughed and said:

"Here, Monsieur Pierrot of Yale, you lose five yards for slugging."

I did not know what this meant but I remember the words and this made a great laugh among the three men.

Madame Lacroix did not come until after the party was finished. But both the Count de Beauchamp and the Countess came. I could not believe my eyes when I saw the Countess. She was very pale and thin and weak, but she came. When she saw me, she took my hand.

"Oh, I am so sorry," she said. "Do you forgive?"

It would have been necessary to have a heart of stone not to forgive and not to forget everything except her grief when she said that.

"Please say no more, Madame," I said.

Then she went in to meet the gentlemen. Now all this time Jean and Antonin and Lucille and Grandmother Battaille remained in the kitchen, but when everything was ready in the dining-room, Monsieur Jack Martin called for them to enter. They did not wish to come even then, but he came to the door and commanded them to enter. Then, as they came in, he waved his hand to the others and said:

"Madame and gentlemen, these are friends of Pierrot."

The Count de Beauchamp and the Countess bowed, but Monsieur Moulton and Monsieur Dick Cardington shook hands with everyone. Then Monsieur Jack Martin commanded me to light the candles upon the cake and you should have seen my Pierrot hold out his hands towards them. He was in the arms of Monsieur Jack Martin and struggled to reach those candles.

"He desires to cut the cake himself," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

So he gave my Pierrot a knife and Pierrot seized it by the handle, but of course he was not able to cut the cake.



"Let me hold Pierrot, while you do that," said the Countess.

She came forward and took my Pierrot in her arms, and I looked to see if Pierrot went willingly. And he did, laughing as he went. I would have been glad if he had cried, I think, but he did not cry. But to have done that at his own party would not have been polite, and I was glad to have my Pierrot show good manners before the Countess. She sat down with my Pierrot in her lap and with her arm about him, and he played with the jewels on her fingers, thinking they were more candles. And the Countess gave attention to no one else in the room but my Pierrot. I saw that the Count looked at her and I saw him twirl his mustache as he did. I suppose such a sight made him think of the young count, for his eyes looked troubled.

Monsieur Jack Martin cut the cake and Lucille placed it upon plates and handed a piece to everyone while I poured the wine. Then Monsieur Jack Martin raised his glass and made a toast to Pierrot.

"He has lived six long months," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "May he live twenty times as many years!"

"You are giving him a long task," said Monsieur Moulton. "But I drink."

"That is a long life. May it be a merry one," said Monsieur Dick Cardington.

And the Count said:

"It will be a pretty sight to see this Pierrot with his great grandchildren about his knee."

And the Countess said:

"May he be as beautiful a man as he is a baby."

So everyone drank the toast and as I myself drank, I said in my heart only this:

"To my son."

After this many more toasts were drunk, and it was wonderful to see how soon all those people in the room who were friends of Pierrot, soon became friends with each other. I saw Monsieur Dick Cardington talk with Lucille and saw Monsieur Moulton talk with Grandmother Battaille and the Countess talk with Antonin as she watched Pierrot play. And the Count talked with me and Monsieur Jack Moulton with Jean. Then in the middle of all this, Doctor Jambeau came and we must all drink another toast to Pierrot with him. He could not remain long, but while he was there he caused everyone to laugh with his sayings. After he had gone, Monsieur Jack Martin and Monsieur Dick Cardington sang a song such as they sing at Yale. I remember only two lines and they are these:

"Here is to good old Yale,  
Drink him down."

Then those two men gave the cry which they make at Yale and which they said Pierrot must learn at once. Then Monsieur Moulton gave the

cry which they give at Princeton, which is another place in America, and they asked the Count if he could not give the cry which they give at his college, but he said they had no cries like those. After this Monsieur Jack Martin asked Grandmother Battaille if she could not sing, and she tried to sing a little song but could not remember all the words. Then she said:

"It is a great pity my grandson is not here below."

"Your grandson?" said the Count.

Before anyone could stop her she had told how Gaston was in bed with a bullet in his leg from a robber. I saw that Antonin was listening but when Grandmother Battaille began to talk, there was no stopping her. I saw the Count look at Monsieur Jack Martin and then Monsieur Jack Martin said to Antonin:

"A song from you, Antonin."

Antonin grew very red and said that he knew no songs. It was fortunate that at just this time the last candle burned down to the cake, which was a signal that the party was finished.

Now as everyone rose to leave, there was much confusion, so that I did not find time to speak to Antonin to keep silent about what Grandmother Battaille told him, as I wished to do. I took my Pierrot from the Countess and held him in my arms until all had gone. He was very tired by now and began to yawn, so that I thought of nothing but giving him a nap. But before I put



him in his bed, I took to Gaston a piece of cake and permitted him to play a minute with Pierrot.

"That was a fine party—eh?" he said to Pierrot.

Once again Pierrot yawned.

"But it tired you and you prefer to play with Gaston, eh?"

Then my Pierrot fell over with his head on the arm of Gaston and closed his eyes.

"Permit him to rest here," said Gaston.

"No," I said. "He must go to his bed."

I took him into our room and I was very glad to have him alone again. I placed him to my breast and as he lay there, I thought of the Countess and how Pierrot had played with the rings upon her fingers. There were no rings upon my fingers, but my Pierrot did not care for that.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

WHEN I awoke the next morning and remembered that birthday party and knew my Pierrot was now one day over six months old, I thought I would see some change in him because of that. But when I looked at his light hair and at his brown eyes, which were wide open, and saw him hold out his little hands to me for his breakfast, I could not see where he had grown older in any way. I knew he was heavier and that he had now two teeth and that he was able to sit up and to laugh aloud, but all those things did not make him seem older. For one thing his nose did not grow at all but was just the same as it had always been. It was very small and turned up and was very beautiful. But I think that even if his nose had grown, he would have been still just my baby. This was because as fast as he grew, I grew also, so that there was between us always the same difference. I was glad of this because, even if I wished him to be some day a big man, I wished also to have him just my baby. Perhaps it is always this way because there was Grandmother Battaille, and to her Gaston was even now nothing

but her baby. She called him "Little One"—that great big man.

It was two days after this party and when Gaston was able to sit up in his bed that what I feared came to pass. Monsieur Jack Martin was eating his breakfast when there was a big rap upon the door. I went below to see who was there, and I saw Monsieur Tupin in his best uniform with his pistol in his hand and behind him ten young men from the village each with a heavy stick in his hand.

"Open that door in the name of the law," said Tupin.

Now the door was already open, so I said to him:

"Well, it is open."

Tupin turned to see if the ten young men were at his back and then said to me:

"I warn you to make no resistance."

Then Arsène, the husband of Marie, spoke:

"You had better have a care. The house is surrounded."

"What is it that you desire?" I said to Tupin.

"You are sheltering here a thief and in the name of the law I demand his body," said Tupin.

It was then that Monsieur Jack Martin came to the door. When those ten young men saw him come, they began to crowd back. As for Tupin, he raised his pistol. At that moment Monsieur Jack Martin with one movement of his arm knocked that pistol into the palm trees of the garden.



"What the devil do you mean by pointing that pistol at a citizen of America?" he said.

"In the name of the law," said Tupin, turning white.

"In the name of what law?" said Monsieur Jack Martin. "Is there any law in France that permits a man to point a pistol at an innocent woman and at a citizen of America? Do you know that if I told that to the consul of America, he would have a gunboat here in one hour to bombard you and your whole damned country?"

"The pistol was for Gaston," said Tupin.

I saw one of the young men at the back hurry down the road and the others were only waiting to listen, I think.

"What Gaston?" said Monsieur Jack Martin, folding his arms.

"Gaston, the thief. I have heard he is here in your villa."

"You have heard, have you?" said Monsieur Jack Martin. "Well if the law proceeded on all that I have heard about you, you would be in jail for twenty years."

"Have a care," said Tupin. "I am a *gendarme* and I have papers for the arrest of this man."

"Where are they?" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

Tupin in a great hurry drew them from his pocket and handed them to Monsieur Jack Martin. He read them slowly and I saw another young man hurry down the road. If Monsieur Jack Martin had not been at my side, I would have been very

much frightened by all this, but now I had no fear at all. When Monsieur Jack Martin had finished, he said:

"Well, this calls for the arrest of Gaston Battaille for robbing the bakery of Jules Dupont. Are you sure this Gaston Battaille is in my house?"

"I have heard," said Tupin.

"What do I care what you have heard? I have heard that you yourself are a liar and a coward, but that is not proof."

"I am an officer of the law," said Tupin.

"And what is this army at your back?" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"I brought them to help," said Tupin.

Then Arsène spoke and said:

"As for me, I came only to see."

Then the other young men nodded their heads.

"Why did you not also bring a troop of cavalry and some cannon?" said Monsieur Jack Martin to Tupin.

Then all the young men began to laugh and Tupin looked very uncomfortable. Tupin turned as if to go.

"I shall return and tell my captain that you resisted the law," he said.

"And I shall call this army to prove you lie," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "I have resisted nothing. There is nothing to resist that I can see. I ask you only to make sure this Gaston is here, before you attack the house of a citizen of America."

"But how can I make sure unless I enter?" said Tupin.

"That I cannot tell you because I have not the honour of being a noble *gendarme* of Beaulieu," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"Then what am I to do?" said Tupin.

"If you ask my advice, I tell you to take this gold piece, go to the inn, and drink to the hope that you may some day grow into as fine a man as this Gaston Battaille."

As he said that, he tossed a louis d'or upon the ground.

"Permit the army also to drink. They must have thirst after this hard campaign."

"The law is the law," said Tupin.

"And thirst is thirst, and good wine, good wine," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

But when Tupin turned as if to go, Monsieur Jack Martin stopped him.

"Listen," he said. "I do not say if Gaston is in my house or not. I do say this, however; to-morrow I will find him and have him before the judge. Is that enough?"

"I will see my captain," said Tupin.

"Tell your captain you could not find him here and tell him what I said."

"Very well, Monsieur Martin," said Tupin.

"But I must have my pistol."

"It is there on the ground. But have a care it does not shoot you in the leg."

Then a very droll thing happened. As Tupin



went to find his pistol, Sport came down the stairs from the room of Gaston and saw this Tupin. Before it was possible to prevent him, he ran for Tupin barking and showing his teeth. Tupin looked over his shoulder and saw the beast. Then he ran a little way and Sport followed more angry than before. When Tupin saw this, he ran still faster and did not stop running as long as we could see. The army laughed and Monsieur Jack Martin laughed and laughed. Then Monsieur Jack Martin picked the gold piece from the ground and gave it to Arsène.

"Go," he said. "Drink a health to Tupin. He needs it."

So they all bowed and thanked Monsieur Jack Martin and went away. But when they were gone Monsieur Jack Martin said to me:

"After all, this is a serious business. I must go to the village at once."

"You mean it is possible for them to send Gaston to prison?" I said.

"It is. He stole from the bakery, did he not?"

"But he stole for my Pierrot and me," I said.

"I am afraid the law will not recognise your Pierrot and you, Little Mother," he said.

"What will Grandmother Battaille say to this?" I said.

"Good Lord!" said Monsieur Jack Martin. "Grandmother must learn nothing of this. Where is she now?"

"With Gaston," I said.

"Then she has heard nothing. We must find some excuse for to-morrow. Now I am going to see that baker and that judge, and then to Nice to find Moulton."

So Monsieur Jack Martin went away and as for me, I permitted Gaston to play all that afternoon with my Pierrot.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE next morning Monsieur Moulton came to the house early and with him brought a French advocate from Nice. Monsieur Jack Martin came to me and said:

"Amuse grandmother while we are with Gaston."

"Is everything going well?" I said.

"It is the judge who must decide that. The more I hear about this Gaston, the worse reputation I discover he has."

"But that was before he met my Pierrot," I said.

"Eh?" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"He is a different man since then," I said.

"Now look here," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "I have an idea this Pierrot may be our best advocate after all. I will speak to Moulton about that. Prepare Pierrot to go to court this morning and plead."

"Are you serious, Monsieur?"

"Certainly I am. It is unfortunate that the facts in this case are against us. Therefore we must appeal to sentiment. I heard something yesterday about the wife of that judge."

"I do not understand," I said.



"Already there are three little future judges in that family but if all goes well, France may have a fourth within a month."

"Oh!" I said.

And this caused Monsieur Jack Martin to laugh very much.

I found Grandmother Battaille and asked her if she would help me with my work this morning as I desired to dress my Pierrot.

"Monsieur Jack Martin thought it would be well if Gaston took a ride to Nice this morning," I said. "Perhaps my Pierrot will go also and leave you to guard the house."

"Very well," said Grandmother Battaille.

"Who are those men with him?"

"They are friends of Monsieur Jack Martin," I said.

"Perhaps they have come to thank my Gaston for some brave act," she said.

"Perhaps," I said.

It was always like that with Grandmother Battaille. She thought all the world admired her Gaston. It was as if the life and safety of everyone depended upon her Gaston. But when she said that, it made me wish to go at once to my Pierrot and tell him what he must do. It made me understand how terrible it would be for her if they should really send Gaston to prison.

Pierrot was awake and waiting for me to give him his bath. But before I did that, I took him on my knee and said to him:

"Pierrot, my son, you have something to do to-day."

He looked up at me with his face very sober and I thought then he looked more like an advocate than the man from Nice who had come with Monsieur Moulton.

"Pierrot," I said. "That Tupin is about to try to send our Gaston to prison because he took bread for us when we were hungry. It was wrong for him to do as he did, but you know better than anyone what a good heart Gaston has."

When I spoke the name of Gaston, Pierrot looked about the room and held out his hands.

"He is not here," I said. "But to-day we are all going before a noble judge to help Gaston. And you must make that noble judge understand about Gaston. Do you think you can do that?"

Then Pierrot smiled as if to say that was the easiest thing in the world to do. So without more talk I bathed my Pierrot and dressed him and combed his hair. Pierrot did not like to have his hair combed. When I reached for the brush, always he put his hands upon his head and as fast as I smoothed his hair, he rumped it up again. I do not know why it was he did not like this.

I had no more than time to do all those things when Monsieur Jack Martin called that all was ready. I saw Grandmother Battaille and told her to have a good care of the house and then took Pierrot out to the automobile. Jimmee had

helped Gaston into the back seat and I sat beside him.

"Have no fear, Gaston," I said.

"I have no fear," he said. "I care not what they do if only you bring Pierrot to see me sometimes."

"They will do nothing," I said. "You will see. Pierrot has come to tell what he knows."

"But Pierrot cannot speak," said Gaston.

"Has he not already spoken to you and made you see things in a better light?" I said.

"He has done that," said Gaston.

"Well, it may be he can speak better to that judge than some who use their tongues," I said.

"If only he could do that for grandmother," said Gaston.

"For all of us," I said. "The friends of Pierrot wish well for you as much as Pierrot," I said.

But when we all came into the room where the judge was sitting and I saw his hard face, it did not look such an easy matter as before.

"Be brave, my Pierrot," I said to my son.

But as for Pierrot, he did not care if he was before a noble judge or not. He looked all about the room and then began to laugh and to play. The judge had a white beard and this pleased my Pierrot, and from where he sat, he held out his hands as if to seize it.

"You must be very quiet," I said to him.

Then he laughed out loud, so that the judge



looked up to see him. Then he laughed again and that judge could not help but smile.

Tupin was there and he was the first to tell about Gaston. He made a big story of that affair and told how he had almost lost his life in trying to catch Gaston.

"It is well I had my pistol," he said.

Then our advocate asked Tupin many questions, but I remember best this one:

"Is it not true your pistol exploded by accident?"

That caused Tupin to turn very red and to become so confused that after this he did not know what he said. When that advocate was finished, he had made Tupin tell a dozen stories.

Then the baker told what had happened and of him our advocate asked this question:

"Have you not received pay for that bread and cheese?"

"Yes," said the baker.

"How much?"

"Two louis d'or from Monsieur Martin," said the baker.

"Which is very good pay, is it not, for bread and cheese of the value of ten sous?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

After this I was called and with Pierrot in my arms I told how it happened I was with Gaston and what he did that night. I spoke the words but it was my Pierrot who really told. With him in my arms, as he was that night, I saw everything again as if it were yesterday. While I spoke, my Pierrot

played with my hair and laughed and held out his hands first to the judge and then to Gaston until it was all everyone could do not to smile, he was so droll. When I had finished, the judge said:

"How old is that boy?"

"He is one week over six months," I said.

"A fine boy," said the judge.

Then Gaston was asked to tell his story and he said just this:

"The mother of Pierrot here had hunger. I knew she must have food to give strength to Pierrot. I had no money, so I took the bread and cheese. That is all."

"Did you intend to steal it?" asked that judge.

"If I could get it in no other way," said Gaston.

"And you are sorry now that you did that?"

"No," said Gaston.

Now when Gaston said that, I had great fear. I rose to my feet and before anyone could stop me, I said:

"If it had not been for me, he would not have taken that bread. Pierrot knows what a good heart he has and that he does not mean to take anything ever again."

"Quiet, Madame," said the judge.

Then the judge began to talk to the advocates. He said that Gaston had a very bad reputation around the village. While there was no proof of other crimes, it was thought he had robbed many people. He talked like this for five minutes and then he stopped a minute and at just this place my

Pierrot laughed aloud once more, seeing Gaston smile at him. Our advocate turned and shook his head at him. It was as if Pierrot were laughing at the judge and of course that is a very terrible thing to do. But that judge thought a moment and then said this:

“How is it possible to maintain the dignity of the court with a laughing infant in the room? I give this Gaston Battaille his freedom but shall hold that infant Pierrot personally responsible for the good behaviour of this man in the future. That is all.”

And when we were all back at home again, drinking to the good health of Gaston, that lawyer from Nice came to me and put in my hand a gold piece.

“That Pierrot will be a great advocate some day,” he said. “At six months he won his first case. Permit me to pay him for his assistance.”



## CHAPTER XXXIX

AS I sit here writing all these pages about my Pierrot, I understand what Monsieur Jack Martin meant when he said the life of Pierrot should be measured by days. When I think back, I find that I remember almost hour by hour everything my Pierrot did and everything everyone else did for him. And one thing is as important as another. There is nothing I wish to forget—not a word that was spoken to him nor a look he gave in return. I see now that many little things were big things and that many things I thought were big are no bigger than those little things. Every day was like a separate romance, beginning with the morning and ending at night but covering a whole life.

When I began to write these things, I thought only to make a short record to look back upon when I was very old. But even at the beginning I saw that I was not able to choose one thing from another and so must write everything as I have done. I thank the good God that he has given me such a good memory, for this has permitted me to live over again each day as I write. After this I live it yet again as I read what I have written.

I see also that what I myself lived during those months with my Pierrot is only a little piece of the whole. There is Monsieur Jack Martin and his life with Pierrot, of which I know only what I saw and nothing of what he thought. There is Gaston and Grandmother Battaille and all my Pierrot meant to them in those days, of which I can only guess. There is Lucille and what I saw was wonderful enough, but I know well there was much more. Then there was even Madame Lacroix, who was a different woman because of Pierrot, and Jean and Antonin and the Count and Countess de Beauchamp and even Doctor Jambeau. I wish I knew all they thought so that I might put it down, but I would be an old woman before I had finished.

Yesterday I read for the first time what I have written here day after day and I find that although I have put down so many things, I have not told one half. When I have finished, I will go back and write in those other things.

When the judge permitted Gaston to return to the villa, I saw that my Pierrot had been given a great task for a boy not yet a year old. While I believed Gaston to be a good man, I knew as a woman that it was no small thing to be made responsible even for a good man. There was the father of Pierrot—an honest man and kind—but even in the few months I had him, I found him like a big child to be watched and guarded. I could trust my Pierre more than most women trust

their men, but there were bold women who smiled at him and there were bad men who tempted him. Men are well enough when they are not tempted, but sometimes I think that all the world is doing nothing else. So as soon as Grandmother Battaille left her grandson for a moment and Pierrot was in his bed for his nap, I went in to see Gaston.

"Gaston," I said. "Here is my Pierrot because of you made a father before he is seven months old."

"What is that?" said Gaston.

"The noble judge has permitted you to begin your life again. But you remember what he said. He said that my Pierrot must be responsible for you."

"You need have no fear of me," said Gaston. "But as for what he said about Pierrot—that was only a jest."

"I do not like to hear you say that, Gaston," I said.

"Are you serious?"

"Certainly I am serious," I said. "When my Pierrot is given work to do, he does not make light of it."

For a moment Gaston looked at me and then I saw his cheeks grow red.

"Pardon me, Little Mother," he said.

"I ask only that you give my Pierrot no cause to worry," I said.

"I will have a care," he said.



Then he was silent a moment until he said as if to himself:

"Little Father Pierrot! Well that name becomes him. From the first he has been like a father."

So it was that, after this, Gaston sometimes spoke of Pierrot as "Little Father Pierrot" until many came to call him that. At first I did not like it very well because it made my Pierrot seem so old, but after a few weeks I saw it made no great difference what my Pierrot was called. He might be "Judge Pierrot," as Monsieur Jack Martin sometimes called him; he might be "Prince Pierrot," as Lucille often called him; he might be "*Gendarme* Pierrot," as sometimes Grandmother Battaille called him; or "General Pierrot," as Antonin called him; but always too he was just "Pierrot" and my son.

Now when Gaston was well enough to walk with the assistance of a stick, he began to talk about going home. And one day Monsieur Jack Martin heard him talking like this. Then Monsieur Jack Martin said:

"Well, what are you going to do when you get home?"

"I do not know," said Gaston

"That is bad," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "It is when men do not know what they are going to do, that the devil gets them."

"I will find work," said Gaston.

"But you must remember that Little Father

Pierrot is responsible for the kind of work you do," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"I know," said Gaston, looking upon the ground.

"What is it possible for you to do?" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"I have two strong arms and legs," said Gaston.

"That is not enough unless you go into the army," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"I could do that," said Gaston.

"That would be well enough if you were to serve under General Pierrot," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"If that were possible!" said Gaston with bright eyes.

"Perhaps it is," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"It is sure for one thing that if Pierrot is to be responsible for you, you must serve under his orders. Now I need a man about the place here. If you wish, I will let you live here and pay you twenty francs a week."

When I heard Monsieur Jack Martin say that, I could have kissed him upon the cheek. As for Gaston, he could not speak for a moment.

"You are very good, Monsieur," he said.

"I am not," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"This is nothing but an affair of business. Do you accept?"

"Yes, Monsieur. And I will do everything—anything you command."

"You are under the orders of Pierrot, not of me," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

So that was how Gaston came to work for Monsieur Jack Martin. And he did everything without being told. He washed the windows and the floors and would have done that twice every day if I had permitted. Then he cared for the garden and went to the market and sometimes even took Pierrot for a ride in his carriage. It was droll enough to see this big man doing that but if anyone laughed to see it, they laughed when Gaston could not see them. He did not care if he went through the village or not and sometimes he met there Tupin. Then, as he told me, it was always, "Good-day, Monsieur Battaille," and "Good-day, Monsieur Tupin." After this sometimes Tupin stopped to see my Pierrot. Gaston always told me what everyone said to Pierrot and this Tupin said once:

"There is a boy who some day will be a great man."

And in reply Gaston said this:

"He is a great man already, Monsieur Tupin."

As for Grandmother Battaille, she went home. But once a week Gaston went to see her and many times Monsieur Jack Martin sent Jimmee to bring her to the villa to see Pierrot. And Jimmee was very droll about that because much of the distance he must carry her in his arms.

"*Sacré!*" he said to her once. "If Monsieur Jack Martin had only given me this opportunity fifty years ago!"



## CHAPTER XL

MY Pierrot desired to walk as soon as possible and when he was seven months old, he began to throw himself upon the floor and try to creep.

He was not able to speak and tell what things he desired to reach and so he determined that the best thing to do was to prepare to secure for himself such things. Monsieur Jack Martin had given him a ball of rubber and that ball was always rolling just beyond his fingers. At first when it did this, he turned down the corners of his mouth and cried until someone came to give it to him. But sometimes no one was near him and sometimes we did not understand what it was he desired, and this made much trouble. So he began to practise.

At the beginning, my Pierrot was able to do nothing except to tumble over upon his face and stretch out his arms. Sometimes he was able to reach the ball that way and sometimes he came only near enough to touch it with the ends of his fingers. When it was like that, he became very angry. I do not wonder that he did. It was as if I desired something very much and found my mouth bound with a handkerchief so that I could

tell no one, and my feet tied together so that I could not move, and yet that thing touching my fingers. We say that older people should have patience when they are able to do almost everything they please, and yet we expect children, who are helpless, to have more patience than we ourselves. I know many women and men too, who would fly into a passion if placed in a position like Pierrot.

When my Pierrot was not able to reach his ball in this fashion, the next thing he did was to sit up and think out a new plan. It was not long before he learned to twist his body until he came a few inches nearer and then fall again upon his face and seize that ball. Then you should have seen him struggle to sit up with the ball still in his hands. When he accomplished that, he laughed and kicked the floor with his feet, feeling very proud. My Pierrot always knew when he did a brave thing, and if there was no one around to see it, why then he cried, "Bravo!" to himself in that way. He was not vain, only he gave credit to himself as he had a right to do.

It was not many days before he found that by drawing up his knees and pushing with them, he was able to move forward more easily than by tumbling forward. That was a great advance. Monsieur Jack Martin and I were watching him one day when he did this.

"He has made a discovery—a great discovery!" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"What is that?" I said, not understanding.

"He has discovered he is not a vegetable to remain in one place," he said. "Think of all that means. He has discovered he is able to move by himself. This is the beginning of the end, Little Mother."

"How?" I said in some fear.

"It is the beginning of his independence. Until now he has thought that if he wished to go from one place to another, he must call upon one of us giants about him. He has been a prisoner to us. Now he has discovered he can go by himself. In another month he will be able to cross the room alone. In a few months after that he will be able to stagger upon his feet alone. Then he will be able to walk alone and then to run alone and then—the whole world is before him and what do we count?"

"That will be many years from now," I said.

"This is the beginning of his life as separate from our lives, Little Mother," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

It was enough to leave one without any breath to hear Monsieur Jack Martin talk sometimes. He made such great things out of such little things. You would have thought that the instant my Pierrot began to creep, he was upon the point of leaving me. For a few days I watched him closely in fear lest he might creep out the door and go forever.

But there was something in what Monsieur



Jack Martin said, for I saw that even now my Pierrot was content to remain longer alone. When he was able to move even a little, there were many things for him to do. He would pursue that ball for an hour across the floor and in his progress would discover many new things. The legs of the chairs and the legs of the table were like new worlds to him. He grasped them in his hands and pounded them with his fists and pulled them and examined them as if to find out all about them. He stopped also to pick up in his fingers and examine everything in his path even if it was only a small piece of wood or a pin or a morsel of dust or a straw. He was curious about everything. He would look at it and weigh it and if no one was around, taste of it. It was necessary after this for someone to watch him all the time.

But my Pierrot was not content even with this progress. The next thing he did was to grasp whatever he could reach above his head and try to raise himself. He wished to get upon his feet.

"Now that he has started, there is no stopping him," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "He is answering the gypsy call."

"But you forget he is only a baby yet," I said.

"And you forget what a baby is," he said. "A baby is a young giant. He is given legs with which to walk the earth. Think of all the miles he has before him to walk."

"I do not like to think of such things," I said.

"You did not bring into the world a doll,—a

plaything. You gave to the world a man. He cannot begin too early if he is to play football at Yale."

"I do not know about that football of which you talk so much," I said.

"But you will when you hear fifty thousand people shouting: 'Pierrot! Yale! Yale! Yale!'" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

It was this month that Monsieur Jack Martin received from America many papers with pictures of those men playing at this game. When I saw them all covered with leather and with their false noses looking like demons, I did not care if my Pierrot never played that game. But it was this month also that Yale triumphed over Harvard. And the day Monsieur Jack Martin heard that, he brought home to Pierrot a white jersey upon which he had sewed a big blue Y. That night Monsieur Jack Martin had a great party at the house with Monsieur Cardington and other gentlemen. Gaston served them this evening, but I heard them until very late, making those strange cries of Yale.

My Pierrot made such progress that by the beginning of December, when he was approaching his eighth month, he was able to stand alone with the help of a chair. When he could do that, it was as if he grew a foot in height. Until then his legs gave him no height at all. It was as if he had legs only for ornament. His little feet were as rosy and soft as his cheeks. I liked them

like that. They were beautiful and were made only to look at. It gave me pleasure to think I must walk for him. But when he stood upright, then he became a big boy in a minute.

Gaston stood near and watched him one day as my Pierrot drew himself up.

"That boy will climb mountains," he said.

"I do not understand why he should climb mountains," I said.

"See how he pulls himself up as if upon a peak," said Gaston.

It was just then that my Pierrot fell and struck his head.

"Yes," I said, "and if he had been upon a peak, where would he be now?"

"He would get up at the bottom as he does now and laugh," said Gaston.

"I hope he will never climb a mountain higher than that chair," I said.

To hear those men talk, you would think the only reason an infant grew to a boy or a boy to a man was to risk his life. Monsieur Jack Martin would have him play at football with a false nose and a regiment of men falling upon him, or at baseball where large and heavy sticks are used; Gaston would have him climb mountains and fall from peaks; Antonin would have him a general and shot, and if it must be that he was to be wounded, I preferred to have him wounded for the glory of France. Even Jimmee said that when my Pierrot was older, he would teach him how to



steer that automobile and that then not an automobile in all France should pass them on the Cornice road. I understood that from this minute I must watch my Pierrot closer than ever before and I said that if ever he did any of those things, I must be at his side.

## CHAPTER XLI

AS Christmas came near, Monsieur Jack Martin was like a small boy.

"I have been in France three years now," he said to me. "And in all that time I have not had a real Christmas. And here is Pierrot, who has been in France almost eight months, and he has never had a real Christmas. We will have that different this year."

From that moment, which was two weeks before Christmas, Monsieur Jack Martin talked of nothing else.

"This Pierrot is yet too small to receive many things," he said to me one day. "But he is not too small to give. We shall have a tree, as we have in America, and upon that tree there must be something to all his friends 'From Pierrot.'"

This was the beginning of many rides in the automobile to Nice, and Pierrot and I must always go. We went from one shop to another, looking at everything. Monsieur Jack Martin carried Pierrot in his arms and showed him all the beautiful things and if Pierrot held out his hands for anything, then Monsieur Jack Martin wished to buy that thing. He would turn to me and say:

"What do you think, Little Mother? Had we not better buy that?"

*Ma foi*, he would have bought enough for everyone in Beaulieu if I had not told him that Pierrot did not know what he was doing and held out his hands for everything he saw. But every day we bought something. First we bought a beautiful silk shawl for Pierrot to give Lucille. I knew she liked such pretty things as this but this cost a great many francs.

"I am afraid it is too much to pay," I said.

"When Pierrot gives to a lady, he gives like a gentleman," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

Another day Monsieur Jack Martin bought some very fine black silk for a dress for Grandmother Battaille because he had heard her say to me once that some day she hoped to have a dress of black silk. But I knew that Grandmother Battaille had not hoped for anything like this.

"I am afraid that is so fine she will never dare to wear it," I said.

"We must give it to her at once so that she may have it ready to wear Christmas day," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

So that was done. He sent Jimmee to bring her to the villa on Monday and had a girl from the village come to the house and make that dress. There were tears in the eyes of Grandmother Battaille when Monsieur Jack Martin did that. But on Christmas day she was like a countess.

For Madame Lacroix, who did not like him at all,



Monsieur Jack Martin bought, for my Pierrot to give her, some very fine linen for her beds, because I knew that was what she desired. Two sheets would have been enough, but Monsieur Jack Martin must have a dozen sheets and a half dozen pillow cases of the best. And then as if that were not enough, he had a big "L" made in the corners.

It made me feel as if my Pierrot were a young prince to walk behind him through these shops, knowing I had only to say what each one desired. Monsieur Jack Martin never asked the price. He paid enough and too much for everything, but if I had not been with him, he would have paid four times too much. He asked only:

"Is that good for Pierrot to give?"

If I said, "Yes," then he bought, willing to pay whatever the man demanded. And those men knew him for an American and asked as much as they would have asked a king.

Whenever I said to the man, "That is too much," that man scowled at me and Monsieur Jack Martin laughed.

"Christmas comes but once a year," Monsieur Jack Martin would say.

"That is no reason why you should pay too much," I said.

For Antonin he bought a fine purse of leather and into that placed a gold piece, "From Pierrot." For Jimmee, from Pierrot, he bought a new razor with a brush and a mirror.

"If Jimmee is to continue to carry Grandmother Battaille in his arms, he must not have whiskers on his face," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

For Gaston he bought, for Pierrot to give him, a watch. I do not know how much he paid for that watch because he would not tell me, but it was a magnificent watch. In the back of that watch Monsieur Jack Martin had this engraved:

"To Gaston from Pierrot; to a big brave man from a little brave man."

When I saw this, I could not keep from saying to him:

"Oh, you are *very* good, Monsieur Jack Martin."

"Good? Who is good?" he said with a scowl.

"It is you who are good," I said. "I care not what you say, you are very good."

"Listen to me, Little Mother," he said. "Pierrot is the only good one of us all—except perhaps yourself."

"No! No! No!" I said.

"That is right," he said. "Whatever good is in us comes from Pierrot."

Now this is not the half of what Monsieur Jack Martin bought in the name of Pierrot. To me, from Pierrot, he gave a little watch of gold in the back of which he had this engraved:

"To Little Mother, from her son."

Think of that! A gold watch such as a countess might have, he gave to me. And whenever I tried to thank him, he said like this:

"Silence. It is not from me, it is from Pierrot. Thank *him*."

After buying all those things for Pierrot to give, he must think of yet other things for me to give all those people. Last of all he must have presents for himself to give. There was no end. Almost every day we were in Nice, going through those shops. Always he carried Pierrot upon his arm until those shopkeepers came to know him and ran to meet him at the door. Never would he permit me to think it was he who was buying all those things. Always it was Pierrot until I felt as if Pierrot were the richest young man in the world. And you should have heard those shop-keepers talk to Monsieur Jack Martin about my son. "What a wonderful boy that is, Monsieur!" and "What wonderful eyes he has, Monsieur!" and "Never have I seen so fine a boy of that age!" and "Ah, there is a fine boy!" And every time any of them spoke like that, Monsieur Jack Martin threw back his shoulders and bought whatever they showed to him. Then I saw how it was with them and no longer cared for their praise of my Pierrot.

Now for the first four days I could not see what my Pierrot could ever do in return to pay Monsieur Jack Martin for his generous heart. Wherever we went, I tried to think of something which my Pierrot could buy for him and something that I myself could buy. I saw many things I thought might please him, and each time I said:



"Is it that you would like this for yourself?"

Always he answered like this:

"I wish nothing for myself."

It did not seem right that my Pierrot and I should receive everything and give nothing, but it was true that Monsieur Jack Martin had already everything he wished. It is difficult to buy a present for such a man. But when a man is as good as Monsieur Jack Martin, I think the good Lord shows a way to return such goodness. It is possible one may not know until long afterwards that one has done anything, but the opportunity will come. Pierrot has taught me that many times when we think we are doing nothing, we are doing much and that if one has the desire to do good, then good will be done even if we do not see.

One day we were in a shop and Monsieur Jack Martin with Pierrot on his arm was looking at some handkerchiefs which he thought would be good for me to give Lucille. Near him there was an American girl. My Pierrot saw her and reached with his hands to grasp the gold chain about her neck. She looked up at him and smiled, and I have never seen a more beautiful smile.

"How do you do?" she said, taking him by the hand, and speaking in French.

When she said that, I saw Monsieur Jack Martin raise his head as if someone had called him. Then I saw him look into the eyes of that girl and saw her draw back a little. For a moment they looked

at each other, saying nothing. Then he called, in a whisper, this name:

"Alice."

Even then she did not answer but looked from him to Pierrot and then back to him. I stepped forward when she did that and said to Monsieur Jack Martin:

"Permit me to take my son, Monsieur."

But Pierrot clung to him and reached out his hands again to the pretty mademoiselle, laughing as he did that.

Then she held out her hand to Monsieur Jack Martin and said:

"How do you do, Jack?"

"You are here in Nice, Alice?" he said.

"Yes, Jack," she said with her face very red. "And you?"

"I am living at Beaulieu," he said. "This is Pierrot, and this is Little Mother," he said as he turned to me.

## CHAPTER XLII

FOR a minute Monsieur Jack Martin and Mademoiselle Alice talked in English and I did not understand, but I thought she was anxious to depart. Then he asked her a question of which I understood only the word "To-night," and I saw her cheeks grow very red. Then she said in French:

"Of what use is it?"

Monsieur Jack Martin answered in French and said:

"Pierrot here is preparing for Christmas. He would like very much if you would help."

Pierrot reached out his arms to Mademoiselle Alice as if he understood and desired to make her welcome.

"See. He wishes to go to you," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

Mademoiselle Alice looked at me and then at Pierrot and then held out her arms and took my son. My Pierrot liked her at once. I could see that. I myself liked her at once, for she had a very gentle face and her eyes were blue and innocent. But she did not know how to hold my Pierrot. You would have thought he was a



bundle, the way she held him. So after a moment I took him from her.

Then once more Monsieur Jack Martin asked that question, and I thought he was asking if he might come to see her that night. I do not understand why Mademoiselle Alice was so long in saying "Yes." There are few women who would hesitate if Monsieur Jack Martin asked such a question. At last she nodded her head. I heard her say "Hôtel Angleterre" and I was very glad she had given her permission because Monsieur Jack Martin looked very happy.

After Mademoiselle Alice had gone, Monsieur Jack Martin again took Pierrot in his arms.

"My boy," he said, "if it had not been for you, I might not have seen her."

"She is an old friend, Monsieur?" I said.

"An old friend and a young friend, Little Mother," he said.

We did not remain very long in the shops after this, for the thoughts of Monsieur Jack Martin were somewhere else as I saw. And Monsieur Jack Martin did not eat much dinner that night though I cooked for him beefsteak.

"You are not well, Monsieur?" I said.

"Why do you ask that?" he said.

"Your dinner," I said.

"I am saving my hunger for Christmas," he said with a laugh.

Now when I made my Pierrot ready for bed that night, I thought of nothing but this Mademoiselle

Alice. I knew nothing of her except what I had seen during those few minutes and yet I thought that if Monsieur Jack Martin should ever choose a woman for a wife, it would be a woman like Mademoiselle Alice. Her eyes were gentle as those of a dove and yet she had an air I have seen only among the women of America. It made one believe that it was her love and not the love of her father and mother a man must win. And it made one feel that to win that love, it was necessary for the lover to be a big man. Because she hesitated when Monsieur Jack Martin asked permission to see her, I thought it was not possible she knew Monsieur Jack Martin very well. While I was thinking these things, I saw my Pierrot looking at me. I kissed the top of his head.

"My son," I said, "I think that in showing this Mademoiselle Alice to Monsieur Jack Martin, you have done a great thing. I do not know, but I know I have never seen him look at a woman as he looked at her. Now if it is possible she does not know what a noble man he is and what a good man he is and what a wonderful man he is, then you must help her to know. You understand, my son?"

Then Pierrot smiled at me and placed his cheek against my cheek. There was something in the way my Pierrot did that which made me very glad. What I write down here, I write for myself and so I must be very careful to tell everything just as it was. I was very glad my Pierrot placed

his cheek against my cheek at this time because it was as if he said like this:

"Yes—there are Monsieur Jack Martin and Mademoiselle Alice but also here are you and I. We will do what we can, but whatever comes of this, always there will be left you and I."

That is what I thought my Pierrot said to me this night, and it made me very happy. I asked myself and I ask myself now if I was jealous even a little because Monsieur Jack Martin turned from my Pierrot almost at once to Mademoiselle Alice. I do not like that word jealous, but if there was anything like that in my heart, I wish to say so. I do not think there was, because whatever I felt, it brought me closer to my Pierrot and nothing bad could do that. When we three were in the shops, Monsieur Jack Martin and Pierrot were always together, and I walked behind and could not carry my Pierrot. I do not like to think I was selfish or ungrateful, but sometimes I thought that if I were alone there with my Pierrot and even if we had only a few sous to spend, I would feel more that I was sharing this Christmas with my Pierrot. So when Mademoiselle Alice came, I was both glad and not glad. It is not very easy to put into words just how I felt two different ways, but I know clearly just how I did feel. I know that this evening I felt both glad and not glad because Monsieur Jack Martin had gone to call upon Mademoiselle Alice. But by the time my Pierrot was in bed, I felt only glad



because never before had Pierrot seemed so much not like my baby but like my son.

One may have friends—the best friends in the world like Monsieur Jack Martin—and yet in an hour those friends may find other friends and one has lost something. But when one has a son, then that son remains a son forever. He cannot in an hour find another mother. It is possible, of course, that a son may marry. I know nothing about that. It did not concern me when my Pierrot was not one year old. All I know is what I felt that night; all the friends I had might go and this would only leave me more alone with my son. Now that is very wonderful. To be left alone by oneself—that is unhappiness; to be left alone with one's son—that is happiness. And that is true even if one has a son only eight months old.

I placed Pierrot in his bed and kissed his temple as he lay with his head upon one arm, and then for the first time in many weeks I sat near him in the dark and sang to myself. I sat near my son while he slept, and was very happy. I felt again as I felt that first week Pierrot came when Madame Lacroix went out of the room and left me alone with my son for the night. I felt again as I felt when Pierrot and I were alone upon the side of the mountain with only the stars for company. And if I am selfish or not selfish, I must say that of all the hours I have had with my Pierrot, none are as pleasant as such hours as these. It was then and only then that I felt with every breath I drew,

the joy and honour of being the mother of my son.

And I felt like that also with every breath my Pierrot drew. As I heard him, I said to myself:

"You are breathing because I gave you life. Your heart is part of my heart and the blood in your veins is from my veins. You are there because I am here. Nothing can happen ever to change that. Men may give you honour; women may give you love, but it is I who gave you life."

So I sat there in the dark, thinking of nothing but my son until Gaston, fearing there was something wrong, came to the door and rapped gently.

"What do you wish?" I said.

"Why is it that you are remaining so long with Pierrot?" said Gaston.

"Because he is my son," I said.

"He is well?"

"He is well and sleeping," I said. "I will come down in a little while."

## CHAPTER XLIII

IT was difficult to make a holiday for my Pierrot because every day was to him like a holiday. He was not like older people who, if they wish to make themselves very happy must do something especial. To wake up in the morning was holiday enough for Pierrot. He would raise his head from the pillow and look about at the light and the bed and the walls and at me and begin to laugh as if he had seen none of these things before. Even his own hands and his own toes were always wonderful enough to amuse him for an hour. And when I held out my arms to him, that was a great adventure. He could not have been more pleased if he were going to sea, for even if he had gone to sea on a long journey, that would have meant nothing but going to sea in my arms. It would have been only I who was travelling. He left all those things to me. That shows how really my Pierrot was still nothing but part of me even if now he was able to move about a little. I might go here or go there, but as for him, he lived his life in my arms, caring not if that was in France or in America.

Until Christmas day Monsieur Jack Martin was more in Nice than he was at home.



"I leave everything to you and Pierrot," he said. "I think Mademoiselle Alice will be here with her aunt on Christmas day."

But it was not until the night before Christmas that Monsieur Jack Martin was sure of that, and then he came home very happy. The next morning he did nothing but walk around the house and look at his watch every few minutes while Gaston and I tied scarlet ribbons everywhere. He had bought a tree which we placed in the big room. But he would not permit anyone to touch that tree.

"Mademoiselle Alice will arrange the tree," he said.

I was glad of this because I had much to do in the kitchen. I was also as glad as he himself when the time arrived for him to go in the automobile and bring home Mademoiselle Alice and her aunt. When he went, Gaston came to me and said:

"Is Monsieur Jack Martin about to marry?"

Gaston made me hold my breath when he said that. I do not know why, because I myself thought Monsieur Jack Martin liked this Mademoiselle Alice very much. But Gaston spoke as if Monsieur Jack Martin were about to marry this same day.

"Why do you say that, Gaston?" I said.

"I have my two eyes," said Gaston.

"I know," I said. "But do not talk as if it were to be at once."

"Monsieur Jack Martin does everything at once," said Gaston.

Now that was true but I could not believe he would do such a thing as this in a minute. And when it was near like that, it took my thoughts from Christmas to other things. It made me wonder where my Pierrot and I would go if such a thing as this happened.

"We must wait," I said to Gaston.

Mademoiselle Alice and her aunt came in advance of the other guests, and Mademoiselle Alice began at once to make ready the tree. She had not been in the villa five minutes before it was as if she had been here always. She spoke to Gaston with a smile as if she had known him many years, and she came into the kitchen to see what I did and called me "Little Mother." She held my Pierrot in her arms and played with him as if she had known him since he was born. And she was so sweet and so gentle that everyone felt just as she felt. As for Monsieur Jack Martin, he walked behind her just as Sport walked behind him. And the aunt, whom they called "Aunt Louise," remained in the big room, reading all the papers from America which Monsieur Jack Martin gave to her.

I liked this Mademoiselle Alice very much, but I must tell the truth and say that from the minute she came into the villa, this was no longer a Christmas for Pierrot but a Christmas for Mademoiselle Alice. And this was more because of the

aunt than because of Mademoiselle Alice. This aunt looked at me and my Pierrot sharply whenever we came into the room. I did not know what she thought and I did not care what she thought, but I preferred to remain in the kitchen as much as possible and so, too, did Pierrot. And so, too, did Gaston.

"She speaks to me in English," said Gaston. "And then is very angry if I do not understand."

When Sport came near her, she drew back her skirts as if fearing he were about to eat her feet. In the end Sport came into the kitchen also and remained behind the stove. But you should have seen that Aunt Louise when after dinner Lucille and Antonin and Jean and Grandmother Battaille in her beautiful silk dress arrived and Monsieur Jack Martin took them into the big room and presented them. She spoke to each one in English and when they answered her as politely as they could in French, then it was as if they had insulted her.

The tree was very beautiful and everyone was very happy with their presents. Pierrot sat upon the lap of Monsieur Jack Martin and was like a king. It was all very well, but I know that the Christmas for Pierrot did not begin until we left Monsieur Jack Martin with the two ladies in the big room and came back into the kitchen. Monsieur Jack Martin had ordered wine and cake and candies, and cigars for the three men. With Pierrot on a rug in the middle of the floor the six



of us sat there and talked of my son and drank to his good health. So we had a very merry Christmas after all.

It was on this day that Jean told me a great secret. It was as he was leaving and I said to him:

"I am sorry Madame could not come to be with Pierrot on his first Christmas."

Then Jean turned very red.

"Madame is very proud," he said. "She has something to tell you."

"What do you mean, Jean?" I said, half guessing.

"She commanded me not to tell you but if you will say nothing——"

"Do not tell me, Jean," I said. "But is it what I think?"

"In June if all goes well," said Jean.

"Oh, I am so glad for both of you!" I said.

Then Jean said:

"I think it was when the good Lord saw her love for Pierrot that He became pleased."

"That is possible," I said.

This was the best present brought to anyone in all Beaulieu that Christmas, and it made me very proud to think that even this came through my Pierrot. I said nothing to anyone about this but I felt very glad that night when I was alone again with my Pierrot. After he had his supper I held him in my arms a little while, which is something I seldom did at night. He placed his cheek against my neck and sang a little to himself while I thought of what Jean told me.

"The Lord was pleased when He saw her love for Pierrot," Jean said.

Now it was love first of one kind and then another that my Pierrot caused to be born in everyone. And because my Pierrot made everyone love, he made them better. For no one can love a little baby without loving at the same time a great many other good things. There was Lucille, who, because of love of my Pierrot, loved God much better than before; there was Gaston, who, because of love of my Pierrot, had ceased to be a thief; there was Madame Lacroix, who because of love of my Pierrot, was now as she was; there was even Monsieur Jack Martin, who, because of love of my Pierrot, had found Mademoiselle Alice. There was I myself, who, because of my Pierrot, was a better woman in a hundred ways. I kissed my little Pierrot upon his head and thanked the good God, who many years ago upon this day had become a little baby Himself, causing all the world to love Him.

## CHAPTER XLIV

THIS was the beginning of many days which Lucille and Gaston and I lived alone with my Pierrot. Monsieur Jack Martin was away from the villa almost the whole time. Either he was in Nice with Mademoiselle Alice or he took Mademoiselle Alice with Aunt Louise on long tours through the country in his automobile. Sometimes they were gone one day and sometimes a whole week.

"Manage the villa to suit yourself," he said to me. "Do as you please here and I will come and go as it pleases me."

So Grandmother Battaille came here to live with us while Monsieur Jack Martin was gone and as for Pierrot and me, we were more out of the house than in. My Pierrot liked the broad sky overhead and liked the flowers and the birds and the long Cornice road. So almost every morning when the weather was fair I sent Gaston for Lucille while I put lunch for three of us in a box and then, leaving Grandmother Battaille to guard the house, we walked either towards St. Jean or towards Monaco or back up into the mountains. There were a hundred places that Lucille wished



my Pierrot to see and there were a hundred more that Gaston wished my Pierrot to see. As for me, I did not care where we went. When my Pierrot was with me, all the world was beautiful and I could not say that one place was more beautiful than another. However, to keep peace between Lucille and Gaston, I always said the last place was more beautiful than any we had yet visited.

These two were very amusing about my Pierrot. When we walked, Gaston, who was big enough to carry Lucille in his pocket, always carried my son but when we stopped to rest, then he must give my son at once to Lucille. They were not jealous but each liked to give orders to the other. Lucille said to Gaston the day we went towards St. Jean:

"You are too big, you giant, to care for so small an infant." And Gaston said to Lucille:

"You are too small, my child, to care for so big a boy."

"He has fear of you, you are so big," said Lucille.

"And he has fear of himself because you are so small," said Gaston.

To keep peace it was necessary for me to take Pierrot myself but when we stopped to rest, then, to keep peace, it was necessary to spread a blanket upon the earth and permit Pierrot to play in the middle where we could all watch him.

But such quarrels could not endure long when my Pierrot was near. With Pierrot we were all little children. Sport, who came with us, was the



*The broad sky overhead and the flowers and the birds and  
the long Cornice road*





only one who preserved his dignity. He was like an old soldier and marched before us with an air to other dogs which said:

"I can play with no one because I am the guard of this expedition. There are four children behind me and I must have a care that they return safely."

When we rested, Sport always sat a little distance from us near the road and lay with his head between his front feet with his ears straight in the air to catch the first sound of anyone who approached. He looked at us from the corner of one eye like an old grandmother at her knitting who watches her grandchildren upon the floor. It was droll to see that dog when Gaston, to make my Pierrot laugh, walked upon his hands and knees like a lion and roared. Then it was as if he said:

"Well, children must be children but I do not see the reason why they should be fools also."

Often he was disgusted with Gaston. And yet if my Pierrot ordered, Sport also could play the fool. I have seen Pierrot hold his arms to him and that dog would leave his position instantly and come. Then my Pierrot would pound him and pull his ears and seize his tail and cause him to look as undignified as Gaston. And Sport would look ashamed but say nothing. So if Pierrot caused Gaston to act like a small boy, he also made Sport act like a puppy. And when that dog was permitted to depart, he still kept one eye upon Pierrot as if willing to be called again.

Now that is one thing my Pierrot was always able to do—to take everyone, whether dog or bird, or man or woman, or Frenchman or American, or rich man or beggar, or countess or peasant, and make them to him all the same. To my Pierrot it was as if there were no differences between people. He was able to make everyone forget everything except that once they had been little children like himself.

Now this day that we went towards St. Jean, we were sitting beneath an olive tree back from the road; Pierrot was between us and we were eating our lunch when we heard the sound of an automobile. Then there was a noise like a pistol and the automobile stopped. Sport ran barking to the road and Gaston followed to see what had happened. From where I sat I saw two beautiful women and a man who looked as if he might be a count. The chauffeur stepped from the machine and then he saw that something had broken. He spoke to the man and the man spoke to the women, and they all stepped from the automobile. They were angry because it was necessary to wait. The chauffeur called to Gaston and he went to help. Then my Pierrot began to laugh so loud that one of the women looked towards me. Then with the man they all approached. Lucille rose to her feet and so did I, but my Pierrot only continued to laugh at them. I heard one of the women say this:

“What a beautiful child!”

They came nearer and the man said this:

"Is this your child?"

"Yes, Monsieur," I said.

I will say truly that I was very proud to be able to say that. I would not have been any more proud if I had been able to say: "This is my beautiful estate," or "This is my beautiful sea," or even "This is all my beautiful world."

Then one of the women said:

"May we sit down with you?"

I made no answer and in another minute those two women and that man were sitting around my Pierrot. They were strangers and it was clear they were noble, and yet my Pierrot had called to them and they had come. If Lucille and I had sat there a whole year, this would not have happened. They were noble and we were no one and they cared nothing about us. But even if they were noble, they had once been children and my Pierrot was as noble now as they had been then, so that was enough. My Pierrot cared nothing if they were kings and queens, if they were rich or poor. He cared only if they were able to laugh.

It was good to see those strangers laugh. It was not long before I forgot everything and Lucille forgot everything except Pierrot. We laughed with those noble strangers to see Pierrot try to crawl first towards one and then the other. He caught his feet in his skirts and rolled over like a ball. When he did that, he only laughed louder



and rose to his hands and knees to begin again. Now it was not possible that these three strangers had never before seen a baby do such things, and yet they watched and laughed. So you see it was not just a baby but my Pierrot who gave them such good entertainment. As for Lucille and myself, we had seen this a hundred times and yet we laughed also. For those few minutes we were all one company.

When the chauffeur approached and touched his hat and said all was ready to go on again, the gentleman drew a gold piece from his pocket and tossed it to Pierrot.

"Here is a pretty toy for you," he said.

Pierrot did not at all care for that piece of gold and I myself did not. I was glad when Pierrot took it in his hand and threw it from him as he did a ball. I do not like people to think that everything can be paid for in pieces of gold. But the gentleman only laughed.

"There is extravagance! He tosses it away like a stone."

It was one of the women who spoke with understanding.

"What is gold to him?" she said. "He has the world at his feet."

So they nodded good-bye and returned to their automobile. When Gaston came back to us, his eyes were big.

"Do you know who that was?" he said.

"No," I said.



*Monaco*





"Well," said Gaston, "that was the Prince of Monaco to whom you were talking."

"It matters nothing to me what men call him," I said. "To me he is only a friend of Pierrot. Take his gold piece, Gaston. My Pierrot does not care for such things."

## CHAPTER XLV

I DO not think in advance what I shall write here and what I shall not write. Each day I write of what I think first as I remember those days when Gaston and Lucille and I lived as if we had nothing else to do in the world except to live and be happy with Pierrot. One time, when Monsieur Jack Martin had been away a whole week, I said to him:

"It does not seem right that I should do nothing, Monsieur."

"Is it that you are doing nothing?" he said to me.

"For Pierrot and myself every day is like a *fête* day," I said.

"Is that nothing?" he said.

"For us it is much," I said. "It is too much."

"I do not understand. Does it tire you?"

"It is wonderful," I said. "Oh, Monsieur, it is as if Pierrot were a prince."

Then Monsieur Jack Martin stood in front of me and looked at me sadly.

"Little Mother," he said, "when it is possible for a man or a man-child to feel like a prince, for the love of God do nothing to prevent it. This is

the age of love for Pierrot. Never again will love come to him in such sweet form as now. He loves now like the angels—apart from men. When he loves like a man, then he must suffer like a man."

That was all he said, but he spoke so gently and with such sadness in his eyes that he made me sad also. It was clear that if he loved this Mademoiselle Alice, it was with a love that brought pain. That did not seem possible but it was what he said. I did not understand how a young girl with such gentle eyes could bring pain to such a strong man. I did not like her because of this. I tried to think of something of comfort I could say to Monsieur Jack Martin but there was nothing which a woman like me could say to such a man.

"I think Pierrot is sad when he does not see you," I said.

He looked up when I said that.

"Honest?" he said as if pleased. "Where is he now?"

So I brought Pierrot to him and he took him in his arms and walked with him as he walked with him the first time he saw him. It was not long before my Pierrot made him laugh. When Monsieur Jack Martin returned my Pierrot to me he said:

"Permit him to remain in his fairy kingdom as long as possible."

"Pierrot would be glad if he could take you with him," I made bold to say.



"Perhaps some day he will," he said.

When I write of these days, I try to see them as I saw then and not as I see now. What I see now does not matter. What I see now has nothing to do with my Pierrot at that time. I did not then see in advance of each day, and as I write this I do not wish to see in advance of each day. That is why I am putting down all these things so that I may remember as I saw then and not as I see now.

It was a wonderful world through which my Pierrot led me with his little hand in mine during these months. And though his hand was so small and his little legs so weak, that hand was big enough to help everyone and those legs steady enough to lead us all into his fairy kingdom. It was a world all of sunshine and blue sky. I suppose it rained sometimes but I do not remember any rain. I suppose that sometimes the sky was black, but I cannot remember any black sky. I see only one day after another clear and bright. To remember those days is like remembering Heaven. And as they were then, so I wish always to remember them. To me it does not seem kind to those we love to remember only the sad things about them as many do.

There is the day we started early and went up into the mountains to find that cuckoo. Gaston often made a noise like a cuckoo to make my Pierrot laugh, and to see him move his arms like wings. So one evening Gaston said:

"I have told Pierrot many times that I would

take him to see that cuckoo. Well, why can we not go to-morrow?"

"I am willing," I said.

"It is our duty," said Gaston. "That cuckoo needs again to see Pierrot in order to strengthen his faith in that story he is telling."

"To listen to you, one would think that cuckoo really told that story," I said.

"You do not know about birds as Pierrot and I do," said Gaston.

"I know everything my Pierrot knows," I said.

"How is that possible?" said Gaston. "You are only a woman."

Gaston liked to talk like this. It pleased him to think that because my Pierrot was a boy, then there were many things which I could not understand.

"Bah!" I said. "It is the women who know everything—both about themselves and about men."

"You tell that to Pierrot and you will see him smile," said Gaston.

So that night, when I was making my Pierrot ready for bed, I said to him like this:

"My son, you must have no secrets from your mother. You need not fear to tell me everything—even what Gaston tells to you. Men know only what men know and sometimes that is not very much, but a woman knows what women know who are the mothers of men. You understand, my son? You have no secrets from me, eh?"

And then, while I held my breath, it was even as Gaston said—my Pierrot smiled. I could not believe and I placed him upon my knee and commanded him to look into my eyes.

“Pierrot,” I said. “You do not understand! It is not that I am curious. It is not that I do not trust you. It is only that I wish you to know that you and I are one. I wish you to feel that you may think out loud to me just as you think in silence to yourself. I will not scold you, my Pierrot. But I have lived a long time, my son, and I understand many things which you will not understand until you also have lived a long time. Of course you have no secrets now. I do not care about that cuckoo except that I wish you to begin even now to tell me everything. I do not wish you to have a secret even about that cuckoo, because it is a secret. You understand now? You have no secrets to keep from your mother—eh?”

Then once again my Pierrot smiled. And it was exactly as if he did have a secret. It was a very wise smile such as I have seen men smile at women. I did not like this. I put my arms around my son and drew him tight to me. I did not blame Gaston. It was not his fault. It was the fault of all men who keep secrets from women. I think that is why men and women do not understand each other better. That is why men do not better understand their wives and why mothers do not better understand their sons. It is not



right. So I held my Pierrot in my arms for a long time until he almost fell asleep before he was ready for bed.

But although I had great fear at first, I began to see that after all my Pierrot perhaps meant nothing by that smile. It was possible he tried to tease me. It was possible he smiled only as he always smiled when I spoke to him. I said to myself that when he was able to talk, then it would be different. He could not tell me anything now even if he desired. So I felt calmer in my mind and gave him his supper and placed him in his bed.

But after that I sat by his bed for a long time. I thought over what I would do when he was able to talk. I said to myself that every night I would ask him to tell all that had happened during the day. I would lead him to tell me everything and so together we would grow day by day. I saw that I must go back to the time when I also was a little baby and grow from there with him. He would tell me all he learned as a man and I would tell him all I learned as a woman, and so he would know both sides. Then he would be able to know both men and women and would be able to judge more fairly both men and women. If he was to be a noble judge, that was necessary.

But I did not tell Gaston that my Pierrot had smiled when I asked him that question. I knew he would not understand, for after all Gaston was nothing but a man.

## CHAPTER XLVI

PIERROT and I and Gaston and Lucille started early the next morning to go up into the mountains and find that cuckoo. Gaston with Pierrot in his arms walked rapidly through the village and Lucille and I followed. It was this morning we met Monsieur Tupin. He put himself in our path, so that it was necessary to speak to him.

"Good-morning, Monsieur Battaille," he said.

"Good-morning, Monsieur Tupin," said Gaston.

"It goes well with you?" said Monsieur Tupin.

"Well enough," said Gaston. "And with you, Monsieur Tupin?"

"Very well," said Monsieur Tupin. "It goes well with Pierrot and the ladies?"

"It always goes well with Pierrot," said Gaston. "As for the ladies, they must answer for themselves, Monsieur Tupin."

Then Gaston walked ahead and we stopped a moment to talk with Monsieur Tupin. He said Pierrot was growing into a big boy.

"He will soon be as big as Monsieur Battaille,—eh?" he said.

After we left the village and were on the moun-

tain road, we went more slowly, for Gaston must stop and tell Pierrot everything about the trees and the birds and the flowers. It was as if all things on the mountain road were the property of Gaston. It was as if the whole mountain were his grand estate. It was so he felt and it was so he made us feel. It was because of this that Lucille called him King Gaston.

"Have I your permission to pick this flower, King Gaston?" she said.

He thought she was laughing at him at first and did not like this, but she continued. A little later she said this:

"Have I your permission to rest upon one of your rocks, King Gaston?"

Then Gaston said:

"Yes, my Queen Lucille."

This caused Lucille to become very red in her cheeks and she would not sit down at all. Gaston laughed and I laughed and my Pierrot laughed, but after this Lucille did not call Gaston by that name any more.

There was so much for my Pierrot to see in the woods. For Lucille and me it was enough just to be in the woods and smell the trees and have the blue sky above us. It was everything together that we liked and saw, but as for Pierrot, it was everything by itself. To us one tree was much like another tree and one flower like another flower and one bird like another. They were all beautiful. But to my Pierrot every tree and flower and bird



and even every stone was as different as men and women are different from one another. He wished to see each one and feel each one with his hand. I have seen him hold out his arms to a tree as if it were a man and talk to it and laugh at it. And sometimes I thought this was not because he knew less than we did but because he knew more. It was not because he had not learned the things of this world but had not yet forgotten the things of that world from which he came.

My Pierrot liked even the little green lizards, which I did not like at all. Gaston knew where to find those horrible things beneath the rocks. He took great pleasure in making them run towards Lucille and me. Then, when we ran, he laughed and Pierrot laughed with him. Once he was about to put one in the hands of Pierrot, who desired it, when I commanded him not to do that.

"I shall take Pierrot away from you," I said.

"That is right," said Lucille. "He is not to be trusted with that boy."

Then Gaston said:

"Bah! You are two women. Pierrot is a little brother to every beast of the forest."

"He is a brother to the birds but not to the lizards," said Lucille.

"You do not understand—you women," said Gaston.

"I understand that a lizard is not a plaything for an infant," I said.

"You shall see," said Gaston. "When he is a

little older, he will come home to you with his pockets full of those lizards."

"Then I shall not make for him any pockets," I said.

"Then he shall use my pockets," said Gaston. "It will be well if Pierrot is the friend of everything which lives and not the enemy."

I think I liked better to walk along the Cornice road with my Pierrot than in these woods. Here it was always Pierrot and Sport and Gaston on one side, and Lucille and I on the other. I did not like this because, as Lucille told Gaston:

"A baby is a baby. He is neither a man nor a woman but only a baby, and it is for women to care for babies, not men."

To this Gaston said:

"It would go hard with babies if they saw only women. *Ma foi*, they would never be anything more than babies then if they lived to be a hundred years old."

"Well," said Lucille. "That is all men are as it is."

With so many things to stop us we were a long time before we came to the river, but when we reached that running water, it made the strange walk I had taken with my Pierrot and Gaston seem like yesterday. And the memory of it made me wish to carry my Pierrot again. I took him from Gaston and bore him in my arms.

"It was here we came when I ran away from the

Count," I said to Lucille. "My Pierrot and Gaston were two brave men that night."

"It was a terrible night," said Lucille.

"But I like better to remember it than many nights when we were safe at home," I said. "You walk with Gaston and permit him to help you over the rocks."

"Why?" said Lucille.

"Because I wish to walk alone again with my Pierrot," I said.

So Gaston and Lucille went in advance and I saw that Gaston was very tender with Lucille. With his big hand upon her little arm he guided her and once he lifted her from the ground and carried her over a bad place. Lucille scolded Gaston for that but it was only with her mouth. Her eyes showed that she liked to feel such strength as Gaston had.

As for me, I held my Pierrot close and talked to him in my heart.

"You remember nothing of that night, my son," I said. "You slept in my arms while I guarded you. There were many dangers and yet you remember none of them and do not even remember that you were in my arms. That is because the good Lord knows that with a mother you need nothing more. I suppose my mother guarded me and cared for me, and yet I remember nothing of that. When you are older, will you also forget?"

I asked myself that and tried to remember what my mother did for me. I remembered nothing. I



could have cried then because I could not remember. Never before had I thought of this—that what I was doing for Pierrot, my own mother had done for me, and yet it was as if she had done nothing. Whether she had been kind to me or cruel to me, it was all one. It might be that my Pierrot would be made to forget me in just this way to punish me for my own forgetfulness. I drew Pierrot closer to my breast and as I walked, I made a little prayer to my mother. I said:

“Forgive me, dear mother, because I forgot, and help my Pierrot not to forget. It is not that I am proud or desire reward from Pierrot that I wish him to remember. But as these things I have done have made him even dearer to me, I would have them make me even dearer to him. Forgive me, mother, and help me to remember from now on what you did for me.”

When we came to the place where we had seen the cuckoo, it was just as we left it. Gaston commanded Lucille to sit down and rest and came to me to take my Pierrot.

“You women are tired,” said Gaston. “But as for Pierrot and me, this is nothing. We must find that cuckoo if we climb to the top of the mountain.”

## CHAPTER XLVII

GASTON and Pierrot searched everywhere for that cuckoo but they did not find him. Gaston was very sorry about this because all the time he had told Pierrot he would find for him that bird. When he came back to where we sat, he said:

"Well, if I cannot find that cuckoo, then I must take Pierrot to the top of the mountain and show him the hole where the wolf lives as I promised him."

When Lucille heard that, she jumped to her feet.

"Give me that infant," she said.

"But why?" said Gaston. "When I make a promise, it is a promise."

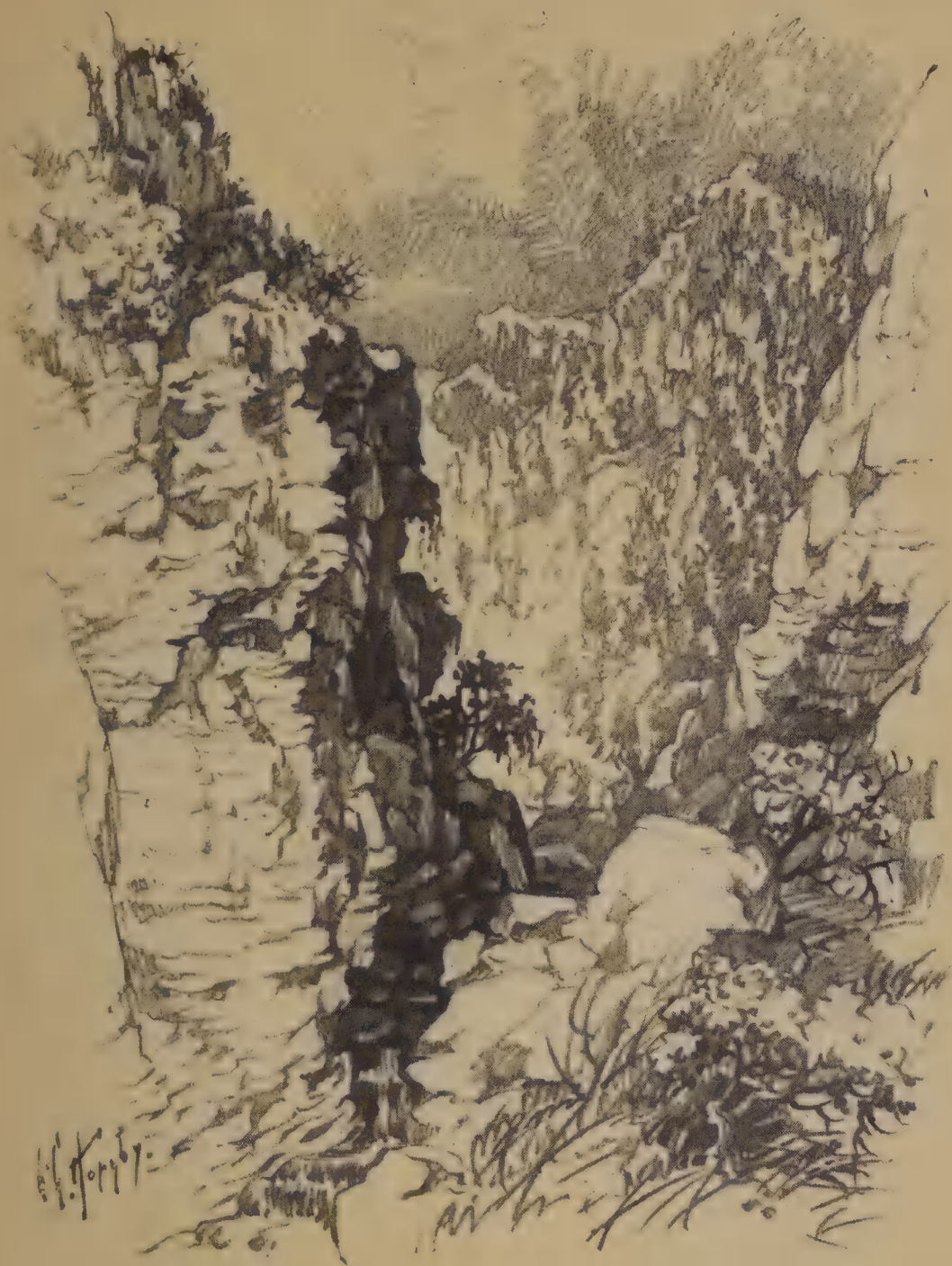
"You should not promise such a thing as that," I said to Gaston. "I do not wish my son to play with a wolf."

"It is wolf enough when he plays with Gaston," said Lucille.

Then Lucille took Pierrot from his arms.

"If with you women Pierrot ever grows to be a man, it will be a miracle," said Gaston.

"It is sure that if he is eaten by a wolf he will not grow to be a man with anyone," said Lucille.



*The hole where the wolves live in the mountains*





"Go yourself and play with that wolf if you like his company better than our company."

To keep peace we placed Pierrot upon a blanket in our midst again. Then Gaston made a fire and boiled some water for the coffee and we ate our dinner. Pierrot played with some stones and was very happy. He cared no more about one thing than another. If he could not find a cuckoo, then he would play with a wolf; if he could not have a wolf, then he would amuse himself with stones. And all the time we talked and decided things for him he cared nothing. We might quarrel and think different ways but as for him, it did not matter if we decided on the one thing or the other. If Gaston had been permitted to take him to see the wolf, he would have been happy; but if it was decided that he should not go and see that wolf, then also he was happy. It was upon himself he depended for happiness and not upon other people. I liked to think this was because he trusted me so perfectly, but sometimes I had fear it was only because he trusted everyone. Of course, I desired my Pierrot to love everyone, but also I desired that he should love me a little more than anyone else. It was right that he should because he was my son.

I gave Pierrot his dinner and then he went to sleep in my arms while we sat about the fire and talked in low voices. It was Gaston and Lucille who talked while I listened. Gaston sat close to Lucille and he said:

"This is like home to me here."

"I suppose you would like to live in a hole in the side of the mountain," said Lucille.

"Yes," said Gaston. "That would be fine. And you?"

"I do not like the dark," said Lucille.

"There is less to fear in the dark than in the day when people are about," said Gaston.

Then I saw Lucille look at Gaston but he did not see. I saw her eyes grow bright.

"You feel like that because you are so strong," she said. "It is different when you have only arms like these."

She held up her arm and it was very small. Gaston placed his hand upon it gently.

"You are like Pierrot," Gaston said. "His arms also are small, and yet he is strong because he makes everyone wish to use all their strength for him."

Now Gaston was not a man to make pretty speeches unless he meant them. I saw the cheeks of Lucille grow red and it was this which made me think she liked Gaston more than she said. And what Gaston said was true; the weak like the strong and the strong like the weak. But the weak do not like the weak, which was how it happened that so many people in the village were not good to Lucille and laughed at her. It was more because they were weak than because Lucille was weak.

While Gaston and Lucille talked to one another, I drew my Pierrot closer to me and thought how



wonderful it was that because he was a baby without much strength, all men were willing to share with him their greater strength. It was not only Gaston and Monsieur Jack Martin and Doctor Jambeau and Jean and Antonin who would gladly fight for him, I thought, but even strangers. If I went to any part of France, I myself might have hunger and thirst and die and men would not care much, but I do not think any man would permit my Pierrot to die. If I went to a foreign land—to America,—I think it would be the same. I could call the first man I saw and say to him: "My baby is weak because he has no food," and I think that man would share with him what he had. Or if my Pierrot were in great danger, that man would risk his life to save him. That is just because all men are like fathers to all infants, and all women are like mothers to all infants. The good God made them like that.

When I thought of this, it made me very proud. Here was I who by myself was nobody. I knew that. I had seen this when, before my Pierrot came, I looked into the eyes of women and saw they cared nothing if I lived or died. As for the eyes of men, I had fear to look into them at all because what I saw there brought only more fear. I was alone and no one cared. That was terrible. I felt I had no place in the world and I prayed to go with Pierre. I remember those days and those nights when I saw men and women all around me and at the same moment felt like a stranger who is not welcome.

Then my Pierrot came. In a minute everything was different. From that moment it was as if the whole world were my family. Those who cared nothing about me came to my room to see Pierrot. When I went out upon the street, men and women smiled at me. And now I saw that it would be like this not only in Beaulieu but in all France and in all the world. I was the mother of a little baby—of a little son—and men and women everywhere were commanded by God to help him live. To know this was to feel like a queen.

Of course my Pierrot was not only a baby but also Pierrot. I do not know if every baby would have as much done for him as was done for Pierrot. I do not know about that, but I am certain that any baby would have many things done for him. Even if a baby were not beautiful like my Pierrot; even if a baby were not good like my Pierrot; even if a baby were not noble in heart like my Pierrot—even then I do not know of any man or any woman who would not help that baby to live. No man or woman would permit even such a baby to have hunger or thirst or cold. Because mothers know that their babies are not only for themselves but for all the world, they are very proud and happy.

When I looked at Lucille, I saw her looking at me as if she wished to know of what I thought. She left Gaston and came to my side and placed her arm around me.

“Little Mother,” she said. “You look like the happiest woman in the world.”

I leaned over and whispered in her ear.

"I pray that sometime you may be as happy as I am," I said.

"That is impossible, Little Mother," said Lucille.

"It is possible but only in one way," I said.

"There is not another Pierrot in all Heaven," said Lucille.

"Not another Pierrot to be sure," I said. "But there are other babies."

"Of what are you talking?" said Gaston.

Then before I was able to answer, Lucille placed her hand over my mouth and then, before anyone knew what she was about, she placed her head upon my shoulder and began to cry.

"What is this?" said Gaston, rising to his feet.

I waved my hand for him to sit down again.

"This is something you cannot understand," I said.



## CHAPTER XLVIII

IT was one night when I was making my Pierrot ready for bed, that Monsieur Jack Martin came into the room. He looked very tired. I had never seen him look so tired. He had been gone from the Villa three days.

"Little Mother," he said, "permit me to take Pierrot a minute."

So I gave him Pierrot, and my son was very glad to see Monsieur Jack Martin and laughed even when he was so sleepy that it was with difficulty he kept open his eyes. But Monsieur Jack Martin did not laugh. He placed Pierrot upon his shoulder with the cheek of Pierrot against his own. Then he walked back and forth, saying nothing, but with his big hand upon the back of Pierrot. So he walked as he had done when first he saw my son. Every time my Pierrot saw me when he passed, he smiled. It was as if he said this to me:

"Do not look so sad, Little Mother. Monsieur Jack Martin is troubled and very tired, but I know what to do for him. He will feel better in a minute."

So my Pierrot tried to keep open his eyes and breathed against the neck of Monsieur Jack Mar-

tin until I thought Monsieur Jack Martin stood straighter. It was as if my Pierrot were calling out his strength.

I do not know what there is in a little baby to do that, but I know it is true. Just to feel Pierrot against my breast was to drive away all worries and to make me strong again. I have felt like a very old and weak woman, and then Pierrot has placed his warm arms about my neck and his cheek against mine and I have felt like a strong young girl. I think it is possible for babies to do this because they have nothing to do with the affairs of this world and make one live in some other world where there are no troubles. To hold a baby like Pierrot is like going into a church. In the life of a baby there is nothing which is not sweet and beautiful, as in the life of a flower, so that he gives off this feeling as a flower gives off perfume. Also these babies trust so much they make everyone trust. You feel the trust of a baby as he puts his arms about your neck.

My Pierrot had very warm skin. It was warm and soft—always warm and soft. I do not know anything with which to compare it. I have seen beautiful women with beautiful skin, but not like that of Pierrot. Against his cheeks, all cheeks looked coarse and rough. Pierre told me that my own cheeks were beautiful, but they were like the cheeks of a man as compared with those of Pierrot. His skin was very warm—very tender, so that to touch it made one warm all over. To feel his

face or even his hands was like a glass of wine. I think it was this also which Monsieur Jack Martin liked. Not even Mademoiselle Alice had such skin as my Pierrot.

I permitted Monsieur Jack Martin to walk with Pierrot as long as he desired, but I saw that Pierrot was having a bad time of it to keep open his eyes. But Pierrot did his best. His eyes closed and then with a start he opened them again and smiled half asleep still. It was as if he felt it to be his duty to remain awake and give comfort to Monsieur Jack Martin. Then after a long time he could not do this any longer. His eyes closed and he slept.

"He sleeps," I said to Monsieur Jack Martin.

"Eh?" said Monsieur Jack Martin as if he slept himself.

"Pierrot sleeps," I said.

"He never sleeps," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"Night and day he is always awake."

That was true. Sometimes my Pierrot closed his eyes and rested, but he was never asleep. He did not sleep as when men sleep and for a little while are out of the world. If I awoke at night and heard my Pierrot breathe, then it was as if he were awake. His skin was still warm and soft. And he was beautiful with his eyes closed. He was more than ever like an angel. I have watched him hour after hour when he was asleep as one watches a beautiful painting. And he smiled in his sleep at his wonderful dreams. Often



I wondered of what he dreamed. It must have been of angels and of Heaven because he knew of nothing else.

It was an hour before Monsieur Jack Martin gave back Pierrot to me. Then I put Pierrot into his night robe and placed him in his bed. He did not wake.

When I went downstairs, Monsieur Jack Martin was sitting in the big room, smoking his pipe in the dark.

"Come in," he said.

I obeyed and then he said:

"Sit down. Tell me what you and Pierrot have been doing."

So I told him everything, and how we went up into the mountains to find the cuckoo and what Gaston said and Lucille said.

"Is Gaston beginning to love Lucille?" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"I think so, Monsieur," I said.

"Then God help him," he said.

"I think he will make a fine man for Lucille," I said.

"Is it that Lucille loves Gaston?" he said.

"I do not know that," I said.

"Then of what use is it for Gaston to love Lucille?" he said.

"Perhaps his love will awaken love in Lucille," I said.

"It will not," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

He said that fiercely and began to walk back

and forth, making clouds of smoke from his pipe.

"God help Gaston if he depends upon that," said Monsieur Jack Martin. I remember his words well.

"There is a saying that love makes love," I said.

"There are many sayings," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "Those sayings tell only what would happen if the world were right. But the world is not right. It is a damned wrong world. A man may burn himself up with love and only have a woman pity him."

Never before had I heard Monsieur Jack Martin talk like that. Always before he had commanded the world and now it was as if he himself were being commanded. It was clear this Mademoiselle Alice was not good to him. It made me angry to think that she should be so cruel and should do evil to such a good man. If Monsieur Jack Martin had been Gaston, there were many things I would have said to him. But I said nothing. To see him like this made me wish to return to Pierrot.

"Little Mother," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "I can talk to you because you are the mother of Pierrot. Do you see any reason for having fear of me?"

"Having fear of you?" I said.

I did not know. There were many people who did have fear of Monsieur Jack Martin. It was not an evil fear but such fear as one might have of

a king. But if I had been Mademoiselle Alice, I do not think I would have had fear of him.

"Fear!" he said. "She says she has fear of me. I will tell you, as I would tell anyone, that I love that girl. I have no shame of it. I love her and have loved her for ten years. But she would not marry me then and she will not marry me now."

He walked back and forth again without saying anything, while I tried to understand why Mademoiselle Alice would not marry him. I could not understand unless it was that in all those ten years she had not seen Monsieur Jack Martin as I had seen him in these few months.

Once he stopped and stood in front of me.

"Little Mother," he said. "It hurts. It hurts like the devil."

"I am very sorry for you," I said.

Then he placed his hand on my shoulder.

"If only I understood of what she is afraid," he said.

He said that very gently and it made my throat ache. I was glad it was dark because my eyes were full of tears. I could not help it. Monsieur Jack Martin was such a good man. Then he said:

"You may go now, Little Mother. Thank you for listening to me."

I went back upstairs and sat down by the side of the bed of Pierrot. He slept like an angel. Then I said to my son in my heart:

"We must help Monsieur Jack Martin, my



Pierrot. I do not know how, but you will know. Keep him brave and keep him strong."

And I thought it was a great pity that Mademoiselle Alice could not see Monsieur Jack Martin as he walked with Pierrot. I knew she would not have fear of him if she saw him then.

## CHAPTER XLIX

EACH day with my Pierrot was complete in itself. Each morning when I awoke and saw him awake at my side, the joy of having him was as fresh as if he had just come. When I looked at his hair, which now was so long I could brush it; when I looked at his smooth forehead and at his little nose and at his gentle mouth, which was like a flower, and saw his four white teeth in front, then before these things became real, it was necessary to kiss them one by one. When I did that, Pierrot kicked his legs and laughed and reached up his hands to play. But each morning Pierrot was new. I remembered, of course, the Pierrot of the day before and the Pierrot of the day before that and so to the beginning, but it was as if each were a separate Pierrot. Every morning I bore another Pierrot until now I had a hundred sons where at first I had only one.

There was no pain in this new bearing in the early morning of each day. It was all joy—so great a joy that I have pity for any woman who has not known it. When one is asleep, one is alone. When one is asleep, one does not care. But when

one awakes and is still alone, then that is terrible. I do not know about others but as for me, every morning I felt alone when first I opened my eyes. For one second I felt like a stranger who is to continue a journey in a foreign land. Then perhaps I felt a little kick against my side, or perhaps I heard a little voice say "Da, Da, Da," or perhaps it was just a little laugh. Then my heart came up into my throat. Then sometimes the tears came into my eyes. I felt such happiness all through me that for a little space I could not breathe—could not speak—could do nothing but lie quiet and try to absorb it slowly. I was like a man who has thirst and when reaching a spring, tries to swallow too much at once. When I was able to control myself a little, then my heart was left pounding as though I had been running. Before that stopped I heard another "Da, Da, Da," or felt another little kick, and my heart began again until sometimes I was not able for a minute to reach out and seize my son. One second I was alone in a big strange world, and the next second the whole big world was alone with me. I do not know if I make myself understood. I mean that if Pierrot had not been by my side, I would have been alone no matter where I was, but when I found him by my side, it was not possible to be alone because everything of the big world I desired was then in my room. The Countess with all her money for boats and trains to travel where she wished, with all her friends, with all her houses and silks, could



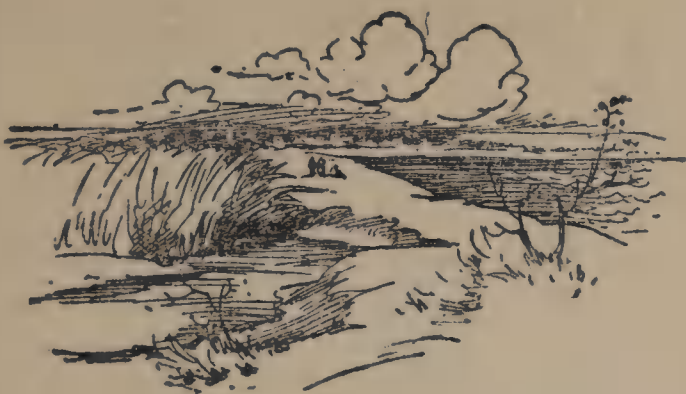
not find anywhere as much as I found every morning upon opening my eyes.

This was not just because Pierrot was a baby. It was not just because he was my baby. It was because he was my Pierrot, and I knew there was nothing my Pierrot could not win if he desired. Anything was possible to him as everyone said. He could be a noble judge if he desired; he could be a great general if he desired; he could be a fine scholar if he desired; he could be a great banker if he desired. All those things were in my Pierrot even when, as a little baby, he lay at my side and kicked his pink feet and laughed.

I liked to think about such things, but it was not for what he might be that I loved him till I could not breathe. Other people might love him so but I alone loved him for just what he was each day. No one else in all the world could love him as a son. This was something different, for I knew deep in my heart that I loved him as much for what he was each minute as for what he might be the next minute or the next week or the next month or the next year. And I knew also that even if he did not become a noble judge or general or scholar or banker, then I would love him just the same. If he became nothing at all, I would love him. If even he were tempted and did things that were not good, even then I would love him just the same. Nothing he might do, or nothing he might not do, could change the fact that Pierrot was my son. Nothing that could

happen to him, or nothing that could happen to me, could change that for ever and for ever. No man and no woman nor even God Himself could change that.

I am very glad I can remember that even when my son was not a year old, I loved him like this. I am very glad that every morning, when I looked at him, I felt as I have said. I am very glad that each morning was the beginning not only of a day but of a whole life because I loved him like this. So each morning I had a new Pierrot and the Pierrot of the day before also, and before each night we had lived a whole life together. Dear God in Heaven, I thank you for this.



## CHAPTER L

ONE day Pierrot and I and Lucille and Gaston sat on the shore of the sea from early in the forenoon until it became cool in the afternoon. The sea was only a little distance from the Villa but we took with us our lunch. We always felt as if we had gone a great journey when it was not necessary to return to the Villa for lunch. It was easy to do this because Pierrot was still at my breast and he slept well wherever he was. We rolled him up in a blanket and he slept anywhere, but if he became restless, then I held him in my lap or Lucille did that or Gaston.

"He is a son of the mountains," said Gaston. "He cares not for a better bed than the ground."

"He is a poet," said Lucille, "because he likes to lie on the sand and dream."

"Bah!" said Gaston. "It would be better for you to make a woman of him than a poet. I have seen a poet in the village and he is a great fool."

"It is possible that poet also saw you and thought you were a great fool," said Lucille.

"It does not matter if one is called a fool by a fool," said Gaston.



"Which is what that poet would say," said Lucille.

"There my children," I said, "you are neither of you as wise as Pierrot, who is laughing at you."

"No one in all the world is as wise as Pierrot," said Lucille.

"You are right," said Gaston.

That is the way in which my Pierrot always ended their quarrels. It is not possible to dispute long with two eyes like those of a judge laughing at you. And then again Gaston and Lucille were of one mind about what Pierrot was to-day, no matter how much they might disagree about how he should be trained for the future, and in the end they always came back to Pierrot as he sat before them.

No matter what Gaston said, to sit in the sun by the sea with Pierrot made us all dream. As for me, it made me dream of Pierre and how proud he must be of his son. The sound of the waves creeping up and creeping back always made me think of Pierre, but there was no sadness in my thinking. When I sat there with the sun warming me and the sound of those waves singing to me and the laughter of Pierrot in my ears, it was as though Pierre were with me again. I loved Pierre. I did not love him as I loved Pierrot, but I loved him. And yet it was only here by the sea that he became again like my husband. In the mountains or on the Cornice road or even at the Villa, I will tell the



*The sound of the waves creeping up and creeping back  
always made me think of Pierre*





truth and say I did not often think of Pierre. That was because my life was so full of Pierrot, I think, and because Pierrot was so alive that it was not possible to think of anything else. Well, Pierrot was also alive here by the sea-shore. I do not know. Perhaps it was the sound of the waves which we used to hear together at night, which made me think of Pierre. Pierre was very good to me. He did everything to make me happy but I was a very young girl while he was my husband. I felt now as though it were not I he had married at all but a very young sister. And I felt towards him, as I thought of him here by the sea-shore, as though he were only a young lover of mine and not my husband. He was good and handsome and he was the father of Pierrot, and yet he was not my husband as he would have been if he had lived through these last months with me. I did not feel as if I had lived at all until after Pierrot came. Before that I had only played at living and played at having a husband. I do not think it was right of me to feel this way, but I cannot help that.

My son loved the sea. He wished to play with the water. When the waves ran towards him, he rocked back and forth and held out his hands to them. When they ran away, you should have seen him watch them as if he felt that was unkind of them. The corners of his mouth turned down and he looked at me for an explanation. But before I was able to say anything, then those waves

came running back again. It was as if they were playing with my Pierrot.

My Pierrot did not like it very well because I would not permit him to crawl into the sea after those waves. He did not understand why always he could not go where he desired. He thought it was possible for him to do anything; to jump from a cliff like a bird, to climb up the wall like a fly, to swim in a brook like a little fish, and now to play in the sea like the waves. This made me think it must be true that where he came from all those things were possible to him.

Once Gaston removed his shoes and stockings and took Pierrot in his arms and carried him a little way into the sea. Then my Pierrot laughed and tried to get into the water. Lucille stood on the rocks ready to run to Pierrot if Gaston dropped him. When they had been there only a minute, she said:

"That is enough. Bring him back, Gaston."

But Gaston went a little farther, saying to Pierrot:

"Now we are where the ladies cannot get us."

Then Lucille turned to me and said:

"Command him to bring back Pierrot, Little Mother."

"Bring him back," I said to Gaston. "It is time for our lunch."

But Gaston only went a little farther and then a big wave came and wet him and wet Pierrot. When Lucille saw that, she ran towards them both

and seized my Pierrot. She was wet to her knees, when she came back with Pierrot in her arms, and crying. Gaston looked ashamed when he saw that.

"I am sorry," he said.

"Like all men you are sorry when the harm is done," said Lucille.

"I am sorry," said Gaston again.

Pierrot, as always, was laughing. He was only sprinkled a little with water. But both Lucille and Gaston were very wet.

"Now," I said, "to pay for that you must both go home and change your clothes. Pierrot and I will sit here alone."

"I am not wet," said Gaston.

"And I do not care if I *am* wet," said Lucille, wiping her eyes. "It is all the fault of Gaston."

"But that will not make you dry," I said. "You must go at once."

"Can I not go to the home of Lucille and bring her dry clothes?" said Gaston.

"Run home, both of you," I said.

So both Lucille and Gaston went home ~~as~~ fast as they could and I nursed my Pierrot while they were gone. As I sat there alone, I thought how wonderful it was that two people loved my Pierrot so much they quarrelled. And I know that Gaston would have plunged into that sea and drowned if it had been necessary to save my Pierrot from harm. Even Lucille would have done that—even Lucille, who was a little girl with



fear of most things. If that water had been twenty feet deep where Gaston stood, it would have made no difference. She would have rushed in even to save my Pierrot from getting wet.

I heard my Pierrot laugh and when I looked to see at what he laughed, I saw Lucille coming from one side and Gaston coming from another. Both were running to see who should be the first back to my Pierrot. Then I saw Gaston do a pretty thing. It was clear he could run faster than Lucille and would reach Pierrot first, but when he saw how serious the face of Lucille was, he pretended to fall. I saw him fall upon his face and knew that he did this to give time to Lucille. But Lucille, when she saw Gaston fall, turned at once to go to him. She ran to his side.

"Oh Gaston!" she said. "Are you hurt?"

"Not much," he said.

She placed her hand upon his big arm to help him to rise. Sport also ran barking to his side to help and as for Pierrot, he began to cry. When Gaston rose to his feet and saw all the excitement this had caused, there was nothing for him to do but to pretend some more. So with his arm over the shoulder of Lucille he came towards us, hopping on one foot as if lame. When he looked into my eyes, he saw I understood. I said nothing, but when he sat down as if with great difficulty I gave him Pierrot to hold.

"La, la," he said to Pierrot. "Do not cry. I

am not hurt much. My leg will be all right in a minute."

Sport began to lick his hand and as for Lucille, she said:

"Permit me to wet my handkerchief and bind the ankle."

"It is nothing," said Gaston.

"It is my fault," said Lucille.

Then she went to the water and moistened her little handkerchief. "Say nothing," said Gaston to me. "It would hurt her if she knew I only pretended."

"It is a shame," I said.

Lucille came back and tied that little handkerchief about the ankle of that big Gaston, who was stretched out there like a wounded soldier.

"Does not that feel better?" she said.

"It is better already," said Gaston.

But Gaston paid for that because, when we departed, Lucille carried Pierrot all the way while it was necessary for Gaston to jump home on one foot. Pierrot thought this was the drollest thing that happened all day and I did also.

## CHAPTER LI

IT was in the months of January and February that we did all those things and many more. How beautiful were those days! They were such days as lovers live, just before their marriage. If ever I wish to think of blue sky, I go back to those days. If ever I wish to think of sunshine or flowers or anything beautiful, I go back to those days. That is because for once everything was perfect. I do not think this happens in the life of anyone more than once. Perhaps I should not say that, because I do not know, but I think nevertheless there is always one time which everyone remembers better than another.

And yet during all these weeks Monsieur Jack Martin was not happy.

He was still at Nice more than he was at home. He returned late and went early. He took many rides with Mademoiselle Alice in the automobile but I think also the aunt went always. But even if he was with Mademoiselle Alice so much, he was not happy.

Sometimes he came home early enough to walk with Pierrot. I think he came home early for nothing else. And one night he said to me:



"You are very happy, Little Mother?"

"Very happy, Monsieur," I said.

"That is well," he said.

"And you, Monsieur?" I said.

"I am like a man at Monte Carlo," he said.

"I am playing with my whole fortune and losing—losing. Yet I cannot stop."

"That is a great pity," I said.

"I do not know," he said, lighting his big pipe.

"I do not know. If I win a smile, I am repaid like a man who wins a louis d'or after losing a thousand louis d'or. I was never so happy and never so unhappy in my life."

"If Monsieur could come with us and live a day with Pierrot—" I said.

He looked at me when I said that.

"Where are you going to-morrow?" he said.

"If it is warm, we thought we would go along the Cornice road in the direction of Monaco," I said.

"You and Pierrot and Gaston and Lucille?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

"How goes it with Gaston and Lucille?"

"Like this, like that," I said. "They quarrel and forgive, but each night they come home happy."

"Pierrot would permit nothing else," he said.

"So they come home happy. That is what counts—to come home happy. Then during the night they think only of the happiness."

"I hope so, Monsieur," I said.

"I, also," he said. "If it were only possible to make Mademoiselle Alice come with us to-morrow!"

He thought a moment and then he said:

"Well, I will ask her. Will you wait for us until ten o'clock?"

"As long as you wish, Monsieur."

"Until ten o'clock," he said. "If we are not here by that time, you will know she would not leave Aunt Louise."

Before I slept that night I prayed that Mademoiselle Alice might come and that Aunt Louise might not come. When I awoke the next morning I jumped from my bed to see how the sky was. It was blue and I was very glad. I do not know why but I felt sure that this day Mademoiselle Alice would come, so I put upon Pierrot his best dress. While I did that, I told my Pierrot about this and said:

"You must be very nice to Mademoiselle Alice and make her happy. I think if she understands that love gave you to me, my son, then she will understand something."

When I told Gaston and Lucille, they did not like it very much and said they would not come.

"It is necessary for you to come," I said. "Pierrot will not be happy if you do not come, and I wish him to be very happy to-day."

"Mademoiselle Alice has the whole world to travel over. Why does she wish to come with us?" said Gaston.

"It is for Monsieur Jack Martin," I said.

"That is enough," said Gaston.

And I thought then that even if Mademoiselle Alice had the whole world to travel over, it was true that never could she find such beautiful places as we found each day with Pierrot. It was so with the Countess and it was so with Monsieur Jack Martin. I thought it was possible they all travelled too far. I do not believe that even if one went to Africa, one would find such a place as that one beside the river in the mountains where the cuckoo lives or that one beside the road to St. Jean or that one beside the sea or a dozen other places I remember with Pierrot. And though these places were near, we felt as far away when we were there as if we had gone many hundred miles to reach them. Perhaps it is possible to travel too far—so far that one comes back to where one starts.

Lucille thought it necessary to return to her house and put on her Sunday dress and her best lace collar, while Gaston combed his hair for a half hour and put on his best suit until I did not know him. When I saw that hair, I said:

"Come here."

Then I took my hands and disarranged it until he looked like himself.

"Now try to smile," I said. "We are not going to a church."

I sent Gaston to the store for lettuce and made many little sandwiches of bread and butter and



lettuce. I boiled some eggs hard and these with cake made our lunch. Just bread and cheese was all Gaston, Lucille, and I ever took with us, but Monsieur Jack Martin liked cake very much.

Before ten o'clock Jimmee came with the automobile, bringing Mademoiselle Alice and Monsieur Jack Martin.

"Shall we all go in the machine?" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

Now it was not for me to say, but that is not the way to travel to such places as Gaston, Lucille, and I visited. It was Mademoiselle Alice who jumped to the ground and said:

"No. Certainly not. We must walk."

I was glad to hear her say that. Then she shook hands with me and kissed Pierrot and turned to Gaston and Lucille and said:

"I am very glad you are going also."

"Lead on, Gaston," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "Here, give me Pierrot. Now—advance! March!"

So we went through the village with Gaston and Sport in advance, with Monsieur Jack Martin behind him with Pierrot in his arms and Mademoiselle Alice at his side, and Lucille and I coming after. It was like a procession.

That day Monsieur Jack Martin from the moment we started was like a boy. Half the time he danced and half the time he sang and when Mademoiselle Alice placed her hand upon his arm and pleaded with him to be quiet, it made no

difference. People came out of the houses to look at us. When Monsieur Jack Martin saw them, he called back to them like this:

"Rah! Rah! Rah! Yale! Yale! Yale!"

And sometimes his cry was like this:

"Riggedy ax, go ax, go go ax, Yale."

Always he ended with that word "Yale," which is, as I have said, a place in America.

Mademoiselle Alice turned very red when he did this, but she also laughed.

When we met Monsieur Tupin, who came running to see what the noise was about, Monsieur Jack Martin gave his cry again.

Then he said, waving his arm to Monsieur Tupin:

"Do not get into the path of the elephants, Tupin."

And Tupin stood by the side of the road and saluted, and we all saluted Monsieur Tupin.

We laughed until we almost cried, Monsieur Jack Martin was so droll. But when we were outside the village, we walked with more propriety though even then Monsieur Jack Martin did not cease to make us laugh. And Pierrot laughed as much as any of us.

## CHAPTER LII

WE walked along the Cornice road, but we did not go very far when Monsieur Jack Martin called to Gaston:

"Are you trying to reach Rome before night?"

"That would not be possible, Monsieur," said Gaston.

"Very well," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "Then let us rest content where we are. This Pierrot grows in weight with every step."

"I will carry him, Monsieur," said Gaston.

"Why should anyone carry him?" said Monsieur Jack Martin. "If we walked a thousand miles, we would find no more beautiful place than this where we are."

I knew well that just as for me that place was beautiful where my Pierrot was, for Monsieur Jack Martin that place was beautiful where Made-moiselle Alice was. For that matter neither did Gaston care where he was if Lucille was near. The only one who did desire to go on was Sport, who with his tail high in the air was preparing to walk the whole day. He did not understand why anyone should wish to sit down when there were so many things of interest along the road.



So we spread a shawl upon the ground and placed Pierrot in the centre, and then we all sat down. Monsieur Jack Martin and Mademoiselle Alice were on one side, Gaston and Lucille on the other, while I sat at the bottom with Sport. It was with Mademoiselle Alice that my Pierrot desired to play this morning. He crawled to her at once and endeavoured to loosen the big, black bows on her low shoes. She had very pretty feet but her cheeks turned red because all of us watched Pierrot at this task. When Monsieur Jack Martin saw her cheeks, he laughed.

"To think Pierrot has such an eye for beauty at his age," he said.

So Mademoiselle Alice withdrew her feet beneath her skirts and, seizing Pierrot in her arms, hid her face on his shoulder to conceal her colour. She was like a girl of sixteen.

"You will have something to do to watch that boy when he is older, Little Mother," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"I have no fear of him," I said. "I am glad he loves everything beautiful, Monsieur."

"Well said," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "If he loves only as an artist and not as a man, then he is safe."

I saw Mademoiselle look up quickly when he said that. But she said nothing and continued to play with Pierrot. Now I watched Mademoiselle Alice all that day and watched Monsieur Jack Martin, and if I were to say which one was afraid,

I should say it was Monsieur Jack Martin. He said nothing without looking to see how she listened to it, while with most people he cared not at all what they thought of what he said. His eyes were always upon her and while she played with Pierrot, his eyes became big and tender. And Mademoiselle Alice, when she played with Pierrot, forgot herself and was very happy. It was not long before my Pierrot had disarranged her hair, and then she was younger and more beautiful than before. She spoke to my Pierrot in English and he listened as if he understood English as well as French. I think little babies understand every language. My Pierrot did not care from what country one came. It was all the same to him. Men were men and women were women if they came from Spain, from Italy, from Russia, from America, or France. I myself have seen that it is only in the little things that men and women of other nations differ. In the big things of life they are all one. And it is true that infants are concerned only with such things as are common to all the world.

When my Pierrot crawled to Gaston, and Lucille, leaving Monsieur Jack Martin and Mademoiselle Alice alone, then I saw that Mademoiselle Alice rearranged her hair and was not so free with Monsieur Jack Martin. I pretended to watch my Pierrot but I kept one eye upon those two. They spoke in English, so that I could not understand everything they said, but also they spoke with their eyes, which were easy to understand. It was clear

to me that if Mademoiselle Alice did not love Monsieur Jack Martin, it was because she, for some reason, would not permit herself. If she obeyed her heart, I was sure she would love him. It seemed to me that all the time she held herself with a great effort. There were moments when he looked at her, that I thought, if only he had reached out and taken her, she would have come. In most things that was what Monsieur Jack Martin did, but now he did not. It was as if he tried to argue her into loving him, like an advocate. Even if he had done nothing, like Gaston and Lucille, but permit love to come of itself, I think it would have been better. This was how I thought at that time.

It was after our lunch that Monsieur Jack Martin and Mademoiselle Alice went for a little walk together while Gaston and Lucille went to find some flowers for Pierrot, and I was left here alone with my son. I did not care. Lucille had her Gaston and Mademoiselle Alice had her Monsieur Jack Martin, but I had my son. They knew only the beginning of love but I knew the end of love.

There was no kind of love that my Pierrot did not make me feel. There was, of course, always and first the love of a mother for her baby—the greatest love in the world. Then there was the love of a mother for her son—part of that other love but different also. I have wondered how I should feel if Pierrot had been a daughter. I



think then I would have loved him more just as a baby and thought less about the future. I do not know, but that is how I thought. But because Pierrot was a boy and because always I saw him as a man, he made me love him sometimes as if he were a father. He made me feel sometimes that even when he was so small, he was older and wiser about some things than I. And now, when these others were concerned only with the love of youth, I turned to my Pierrot and found in him even such love as that. I knew how Lucille felt and I knew how Mademoiselle Alice felt deep in her heart and how wonderful and beautiful this love made the world. Such love is concerned only with the blue sky and the green grass and the flowers and the golden sunshine and the song of birds. It makes the world like a fairy world where there are only good fairies dancing to music. I know how it was when first I loved Pierre. I was in Paris and until then I had thought Paris a very wicked city where a young girl must always be on guard and where below the prettiness, life was very terrible. Then, when Pierre put his arm about me and said he loved me, that city was different. I had nothing to fear after that and thought of nothing but the beautiful things. The noise of the street was like music and the lights were like jewels and all the people were like princes. I remember how that was for a few months.

Well, I suppose it was like that now with Lucille and Mademoiselle Alice. When Lucille said she

was going with Gaston to pick flowers for Pierrot, I knew. Perhaps they thought they left behind them an old woman who had forgotten about love. Perhaps they thought that a mother has no concern with youth. If they thought that, it was because they did not know my Pierrot.

I took Pierrot in my arms and pressed my lips against the top of his head and breathed the perfume of his hair. He looked up at me and smiled as if to say:

“Can any two lovers be happier than we are, Little Mother?”

That look made me dizzy and if either Mademoiselle Alice or Lucille lived in any brighter world than Pierrot and I, then I have no envy for them because to have loved more than I loved would have been pain.

## CHAPTER LIII

IT was on the first day of April that late at night I heard a rap upon my door. When I answered, I heard the voice of Monsieur Jack Martin. I was frightened.

"What is it?" I said.

"I must talk with some one, Little Mother," he said. "Can you not dress yourself and come down?"

"I will come down in a few minutes, Monsieur," I said.

I thought it must be that something terrible had happened to Mademoiselle Alice. I hurried as fast as I could. While I was dressing, my Pierrot opened his eyes. When he saw me, he held out his little hands to me and said, "Da, da." I was glad he was awake because it made me feel stronger. I kissed him and still he held out his hands to me. Then I thought that if Monsieur Jack Martin was in trouble, it was only right that Pierrot should come with me. By myself I was nothing, but with my son perhaps I could bring comfort. So I wrapped Pierrot tight in a blanket and came down the stairs with him.

Monsieur Jack Martin was in the big room and



he had lighted every candle he could find. When he saw Pierrot, he said:

"You make me feel ashamed. You bring from bed a little boy not yet a year old to comfort a big man nearing forty."

"He desired to come," I said. "He held out his hands."

"God bless him," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "He is more of a man to-day than twenty men full grown."

Monsieur Jack Martin took Pierrot in his arms and kissed his forehead and my Pierrot smiled at him. Even in the middle of the night my Pierrot smiled.

"Mademoiselle Alice is not ill?" I said.

"No, no," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "She is not ill. But she told me to-night that in three days she departs for America."

"That is all?" I said.

I did not yet know what this meant to him. He sat down in a chair, holding my Pierrot in his big arms.

"That is all it means to you. That is all it means to everybody else. That is all it means even to her. To me it means she goes forever."

Then he said in a low voice:

"It is for me as if she died."

"Oh, Monsieur," I said.

"It is the end," he said.

"But why does she go?" I said.

"Because she has fear," he said.

"Fear of what, Monsieur?"

"Of me."

"I do not understand," I said.

"No more do I," he said.

Pierrot reached up his hand.

"See," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "Pierrot has no fear of me and yet she——"

He did not finish. He rose with Pierrot in his arms and walked back and forth.

Now Pierrot did not go to sleep again as usually he did. He remained awake, and whenever Monsieur Jack Martin looked at him he saw Pierrot looking back into his eyes. So Monsieur Jack Martin said to Pierrot:

"Close your eyes, my child. Sleep, my boy, and leave me to fight my own fight as in years to come you must fight your own fights."

Then my Pierrot looked at him in wonder and then he smiled. So for a half-hour Monsieur Jack Martin walked with him and still Pierrot remained awake. It was very strange.

Here is another strange thing. While Monsieur Jack Martin walked back and forth and Pierrot was awake in his arms and I watched those two, Sport came into the room. He came in whining and kissed my hand. Then he followed behind Monsieur Jack Martin, still whining.

"What is it, Sport?" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

Sport wagged his tail a little and looked up at Pierrot.

"You wish to see Pierrot?" said Monsieur Jack Martin.

So he sat down and Sport came to his side and, still whining, kissed the hand of my Pierrot. And my son looked at that dog and held out his hand. But he did not smile. My Pierrot did not smile. And Sport tried to leap up and kiss the face of my Pierrot.

"What is the matter with you?" said Monsieur Jack Martin to Sport.

I tell this just as it happened.



## CHAPTER LIV

THE next morning when I awoke, my Pierrot was lying beside me with his eyes open, but he was not playing with his feet and he was not laughing and he did not say, "Da, da." He was only looking. The sun was coming in through the window and outside the birds were singing. I leaned over quickly and kissed my Pierrot, and I thought his lips were hot and dry. I placed him to my breast and for a moment he drank and then put back his head on the pillow. He did not cry. He did nothing except look at me.

I tried to make him laugh because never before had he awakened in the morning without laughing. I kissed him on his ribs, which always made him laugh. This time he tried so hard to laugh. When I lifted my face he was smiling, but it was a smile that frightened me. And at this moment I heard Sport scratching at the door to come in, which is something he never did.

"Pierrot," I said, "is anything wrong with you?"

I felt of his legs and of his body and they did not feel very warm, but they felt dry.

All this time the sun was shining into the room

and the birds were singing. That is what I do not understand. The world outside was made ready as if for a holiday. So I thought that perhaps my Pierrot was not yet awake completely. I rose in the bed to my knees and said to him:

"Listen. Is it that I hear that cuckoo?"

I looked up at the window and he looked also at the window. Then again he smiled with his lips trembling.

I made my arms wave as Gaston did when he wished to imitate that cuckoo. My Pierrot tried to do that also, but he waved his arms feebly and soberly.

Then I thought that perhaps my Pierrot was still sleepy, so I did not try to play any more but took him in my arms and sang to him. He placed his arms about my neck and lay very quiet. Three times I thought he slept, but he did not sleep. I saw that his eyes were always open.

I placed him to my breast once more but he did not have hunger. It was that which gave me more fear than anything. And yet, as I say, the sun was shining brightly and the birds were singing.

I leaped from bed and admitted Sport. That dog went at once to the bed and jumped up. Then he lay down beside Pierrot and kissed his little hand.

I dressed at once. I went to the stairs and called Gaston. He came.

"Gaston," I said, "I do not understand about Pierrot. He will not laugh."

"Is he sick?" said Gaston.

"I do not know. He does not cry. But he will not laugh."

"Well, I will make him laugh," said Gaston.

So Gaston went down upon his hands and knees. Then he approached the bed like a lion.

"Where is that Pierrot?" he said. "Where is that little Pierrot who came to see me in the woods?"

Gaston went to the bed like this. He raised his head above the bed until he saw my son. Then Pierrot looked at him and tried again to smile as he had tried to smile at me. When Gaston saw this and saw that Pierrot did not laugh aloud, he jumped to his feet. He placed his hand upon the head of Pierrot. He turned to me.

"I think that boy has a fever," he said.

He bent over Pierrot and kissed his hair. Then he came to me with his face very serious.

"If I were you, I would call Doctor Jambeau," he said.

"But Pierrot cannot be sick," I said. "Yesterday he played all the day, and see—the sun is shining."

"I thought he was very tired last night," said Gaston. "I would call Doctor Jambeau."

"Perhaps it is his teeth. It was his teeth before, and Doctor Jambeau did not like it because I called him before for that."

"Then I would tell Monsieur Jack Martin."



"He has so much trouble already, I do not like to do that," I said.

"Perhaps if you dressed him and I carried him out in the sun, he would like that," said Gaston.

I went to the bed and said to Pierrot:

"Would you like to go for a walk with Gaston?"

Pierrot held out his hands.

So I dressed Pierrot. He did not play while I dressed him but he did not cry. He was very brave and tried to help me. Twice he leaned back against me as if tired. Gaston saw that.

"I will carry him in my arms and perhaps he will sleep," said Gaston.

Monsieur Jack Martin went early to Nice that day and I said nothing to him. He asked me where my Pierrot was and I told him that Pierrot had gone to walk with Gaston. Monsieur Jack Martin said:

"Tell Pierrot that because of him I begin the day with courage."

At eleven o'clock my Pierrot slept in the arms of Gaston. He slept until ten minutes after one. After that he drank some water but he did not desire his dinner.

We had talked of going to the sea-shore that afternoon, but when Lucille came I thought it was better if we remained in the house. So we remained in the house and I held Pierrot in my arms until six o'clock. Gaston and Lucille sat beside me.

All this time my Pierrot was very quiet. He

ate nothing, but he drank much water. It was not until after six that I saw that Pierrot had some difficulty when he breathed. It was then Gaston said to me:

"I am going at once to call Doctor Jambeau."

"Yes," I said, "I think that would be well."

So Gaston went, leaving Pierrot with Lucille and me. From that moment my Pierrot grew worse. He began to cry a little. Also he began to cough a dry, hard cough. Lucille knelt by my side and prayed. I said to Lucille:

"You had better run after Gaston and bid him tell Doctor Jambeau to hasten."

So Lucille ran out of the room. After this my Pierrot found it more difficult to breathe every second. It was as if someone were choking him. I became faint.

I remember that Doctor Jambeau and Gaston and Lucille ran into the room together.

At eleven o'clock that night Monsieur Jack Martin returned. I was kneeling at the foot of the bed. Doctor Jambeau was there as he had been ever since he came. I heard him whisper something to Monsieur Jack Martin. Then I saw Monsieur Jack Martin raise his hand as if to strike Doctor Jambeau. Then I heard Monsieur Jack Martin say this:

"Damn you, Jambeau—save him! You *must* save him, Jambeau."

That cry is in my ears forever.



## CHAPTER LV

WHEN the sun came up the next morning and the birds began to sing, my Pierrot was gone. It was like that. He was taken as a rosebud is plucked. In one week more he would have been one year old. He went while the sun was shining and the birds were singing. After he had gone, his face was calm. It was as if he slept. I thought Doctor Jambeau had made a mistake and that my son only slept. There was colour in his cheeks and he lay upon his back as if asleep.

Well, it was not true. He had gone.

He was in his clothes as I had dressed him that morning. It was as if he were taking a nap before going with Gaston and Lucille and me.

This came all in one day.



## CHAPTER LVI

**I**T is easy enough—it is too easy—to remember the terrible things. I do not wish to write of such things. My Pierrot was a Pierrot of gladness, and it is that alone I wish to remember. It is the little acts of my Pierrot which brought happiness to everyone, of which I have told. And now in telling about my Pierrot after he has gone, it is still those things I wish to remember.

Even when my Pierrot lay in my room upstairs as if asleep, but cold and without power to smile, many beautiful things happened. I sat by the side of my Pierrot and held his hand. His little fingers were closed. I held his hand and prayed the good God to permit me to go with my Pierrot. It was not because my son was gone that I felt grief. It was because my son had gone without me. He had gone on a long journey without his mother. Even if he was with God, I knew that my Pierrot had need of his mother to care for him.

While I sat like this, Monsieur Jack Martin came in. He knelt at my feet and placed his head in my lap and wept like a little boy. I placed my hand upon his head.

"It is my fault, Little Mother," he said. "It is all my fault. If I had not taken him from his bed! Oh, my God, if I had not taken him from his bed that night!"

"Do not say that, Monsieur Jack Martin," I said.

But he said that over and over again and could think of nothing else. Then I said to him:

"Do you think his father will be waiting for Pierrot?"

Monsieur Jack Martin raised his head and looked into my eyes.

"I am sure of that," he said.

I felt better when I thought of this.

"Pierre will take the hand of Pierrot and show him where to go?"

"Yes, yes," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "Pierre will do that."

"And perhaps for him the hand of my Pierrot will be warm," I said.

As for me, though I held the little fingers of my Pierrot tight within mine, they remained cold.

"Pierrot has only gone from his mother to his father," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "But for the rest of us——"

"Perhaps you have friends in Heaven," I said. "I think Pierrot will find them."

"Perhaps Pierrot will find my mother," said Monsieur Jack Martin.

"Perhaps also he will find my mother," I said.

"So you see he has friends—that Pierrot. He has friends wherever he goes."

"See," I said. "The sun is shining and the birds are singing as if Pierrot still lived."

"That is because he lives in the hearts of us all," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "But if only he could place his arms about my neck once! Just once more, Little Mother!"

It was then I looked up and saw Mademoiselle Alice in the room. She came swiftly to the side of Monsieur Jack Martin. She knelt and placed her arms about his neck as my Pierrot would have done had it been possible.

"Jack," she said.

Then he turned and placed his arm about her and when he did that, Mademoiselle Alice looked into my eyes. Then I saw a look there which would have pleased my Pierrot. And it was as if she praised my Pierrot. She reached for my hand and as she held it, it was as if she said:

"Little Mother, it is through Pierrot I have found my love."

After a little she raised Monsieur Jack Martin to his feet.

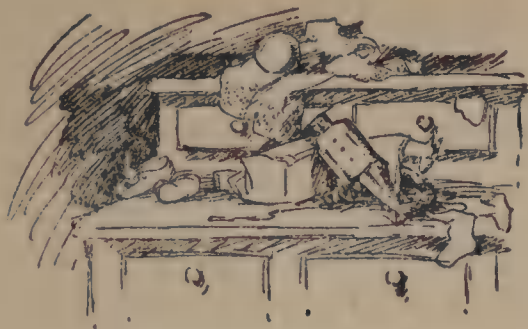
"Let us leave Little Mother with her son," she said.

So, you see, my Pierrot was not altogether dead even then.

But though the sun came through the window upon his face where he lay, it could not warm the lips of my Pierrot.

*Mon Dieu*—not even the sun could do that!





## CHAPTER LVII

FATHER JOSEPH said to me this:

“You must not forget that in Heaven there is the good Mary—the Mother of us all. You must not forget that She also had a son—her only-begotten son—and that He also died. But also He rose again and so also your son shall rise again, and Mary will be there to receive him.”

I was glad to know this and I was glad to know also that Pierre would be there and also that my own mother and the mother of Monsieur Jack Martin would be there to receive my son. They would see how wonderful and beautiful Pierrot was and would care for him. But even then there were so many things about my Pierrot that I knew and which I was afraid they would not know. There were little things about his bath and about his clothes which they did not know. My Pierrot liked the water at a certain temperature. And he liked the little dress which I put upon him at the end. If only he could take with him also his playthings! There was the doll, made of a stick, which Jean gave him and which Pierrot liked. There was the rubber ball which Monsieur Jack Martin gave him. This always slipped from his

fingers and then he would search and search until he found it. All those things I placed beside my Pierrot.

I do not wish to tell of the grief of anyone. I wish to tell only of the beautiful things. So I write down here what, at the end, was given to my Pierrot.

From Mademoiselle Alice and Monsieur Jack Martin there were roses—many, many roses.

From Lucille—shells from the sea-shore, gathered where we used to sit.

From Gaston—pine boughs from the cuckoo place.

From Doctor Jambeau—a garland of roses.

From the Count and Countess de Beauchamp—violets.

From Jean and Madame Lacroix—wild flowers, gathered in the field by Jean.

From Antonin—a garland of olive leaves made by himself.

These I remember among the others, but there were many more. I think everyone in the village of Beaulieu sent flowers of some kind to my Pierrot.

Monsieur Jack Martin ordered the church bells to be rung and he desired the prayers to be said at the Villa. After this those who wished went with me and my Pierrot to the grave.

The sun was still shining as we walked through the village. I did not walk behind my Pierrot but by his side as I would if he lived. By my side walked Sport.

Behind me walked Mademoiselle Alice and Monsieur Jack Martin.

Behind them walked Lucille and Gaston and Madame Battaille.

Behind them walked Antonin.

Behind him walked Jean and Madame La-croix.

Behind them walked Doctor Jambeau.

Behind him walked the Count and Countess of Beauchamp.

Behind them walked Monsieur Tupin.

Behind him came many from the village.

I turned and saw them all and it made me very proud. I forgot everything except that here was my Pierrot beside me and all the world walking behind him to pay their respects. If he had been a Prince, none would have loved him more. If he had been a Prince, none could have done him greater honour. It made me very proud of him. I thought then that even if he had lived and become a great judge, or a noble soldier, or a great banker, or even a beautiful man from Yale, these people could not have loved him more. He would have been just Pierrot even then. It was this which made me so proud for him that it gave me strength. I did not weep. My legs were strong beneath me. I was able to look everyone in the eye. Pierrot was gone, but still he was my wonderful baby—my wonderful son—and all these people came to honour him.

I remember, as I say, two things: that the sun



continued to shine and that all these people came with my Pierrot and me to the grave.

Father Joseph said a prayer. I do not remember what it was. When they lowered my Pierrot into the ground, I felt they were burying a soldier. I felt like the mother of a soldier.

But it was different when all those people turned to go.

Then Monsieur Jack Martin came to me and said:

"Come, Little Mother."

It was then my heart came near to breaking. I remember that I fell to the ground.

"Go," I said. "Leave me alone with my son."

For them this was the end, but for me it was only the beginning. All the others were going away to leave my Pierrot. I remember how my heart ached. I remember how I clutched the ground, burning with the desire to feel again about my neck the warm arms of Pierrot.



## CHAPTER LVIII

I HAVE written many things about my Pierrot, but I have not written one-half of all the things I remember. At first I was afraid I might forget, and that is why I wrote. But I find I do not forget. And I see that what I thought was the end was not the end.

It was not even the end for the others. One morning Monsieur Jack Martin came to me and said:

"Little Mother, I do not know if in your grief you desire to hear about the happiness of others."

"I am glad to hear because I know Pierrot would be glad," I said.

"Yes," said Monsieur Jack Martin, "I think Pierrot would be glad to know of this. I think he *is* glad. It is through him this happiness came to me and I believe he knows even now about it."

"You are going to tell me that Mademoiselle Alice has come to love you, Monsieur?"

"Yes, Little Mother," he said.

"I am very glad, Monsieur," I said.

"This is what she said to me, Little Mother: 'I have seen you humble. I never wish to see you humble again, but it was necessary to see

you so once to know it is possible for you to be humble.' Oh, Little Mother, I shall be humble all the rest of my life."

"I do not think that, Monsieur," I said. "I do not think Pierrot would know you if you were humble."

"I miss him, Little Mother. I miss him day and night. Her love came just in time."

"I am very glad," I said.

"But you must share it, Little Mother," he said. "We have talked of that. We both desire that. We desire you to be with us always as Pierrot will be with us always."

"I do not know," I said.

"Yes," he said. "There is no other way."

I was glad to hear Monsieur Jack Martin speak like this because he was like himself once more.

"We are to be married here in Beaulieu. Then we return to America for the summer and come back here for the winter. You must come."

"I cannot leave my Pierrot," I said. "I cannot leave him here."

When I said that, Monsieur Jack Martin turned away. I saw the tears in his eyes. Then he said:

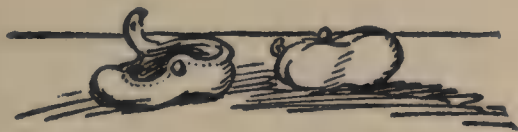
"I understand. It shall be as you wish. You shall remain here and care for the Villa until we return. You will do that?"

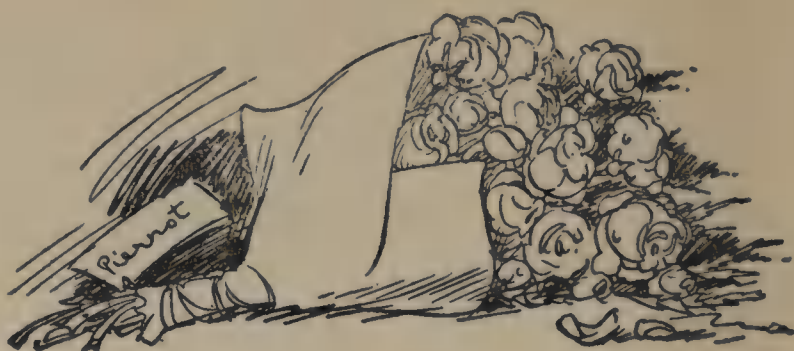
"It is very good of you to permit me to do that," I said.

All that night I dreamed of Pierrot and he smiled at me. He smiled as he had not smiled



since he went. It was so real that in the morning when I awoke, I lay very quiet with my eyes closed, waiting to feel his legs against me and waiting to hear him say "Da, Da."





## CHAPTER LIX

**I**N the month of April, which was the month in which my Pierrot was born and the month in which he died, Monsieur Jack Martin and Made-moiselle Alice were married. Also Gaston and Lucille were married in this month. Monsieur Jack Martin went at once to Havre to sail for America and he requested Gaston and Lucille to live in the Villa with me. Gaston was very glad to do this because he had found work in the rose garden of Monsieur Angoul, which was near.

It was then that I began to write every day of what happened the year before on that day. Now I have come to the end of those days. If my Pierrot had lived, he would be two years old this month.

In this last year nothing has happened to me, but many things have happened to others. One day Jean came to me and said:

“I have something to ask you.”

“What is it?” I said.

“If it is a boy I desire and Madame desires to name him Pierrot. Have we your permission?”

“It is not for me to say, Jean,” I said.

"Yes, yes," said Jean. "It is for you alone to say."

"Jean," I said, "I do not know. There is only one Pierrot. It is not possible to have another Pierrot."

"All right, Little Mother," said Jean.

But as it came about, it was a girl which was born to Jean and Madame. It is a beautiful little girl.

Then in December, when Monsieur Jack Martin returned he came with me one day to the side of Pierrot. When we were leaving, he took my arm.

"I have something to tell you, Little Mother," he said.

I looked into his face and saw how wonderful it was.

"I understand," I said.

"You understand everything," said Monsieur Jack Martin. "But as for me, I understand nothing of this. It is like a miracle."

"It will be soon?" I said.

"In April, we think," he said.

"Everything comes in April," I said.

"Oh, Little Mother," he said, "every day life is beginning. I wish you to love this little one as if he were Pierrot. And I have something to ask of you. If it is a boy, I wish to call him Pierrot."

"But he will not be Pierrot, Monsieur," I said.

"Much of him will be Pierrot. He will live because of Pierrot. He will be a brother of Pierrot."



"Yes, he will be like a brother of Pierrot," I said. "But he will not be Pierrot himself."

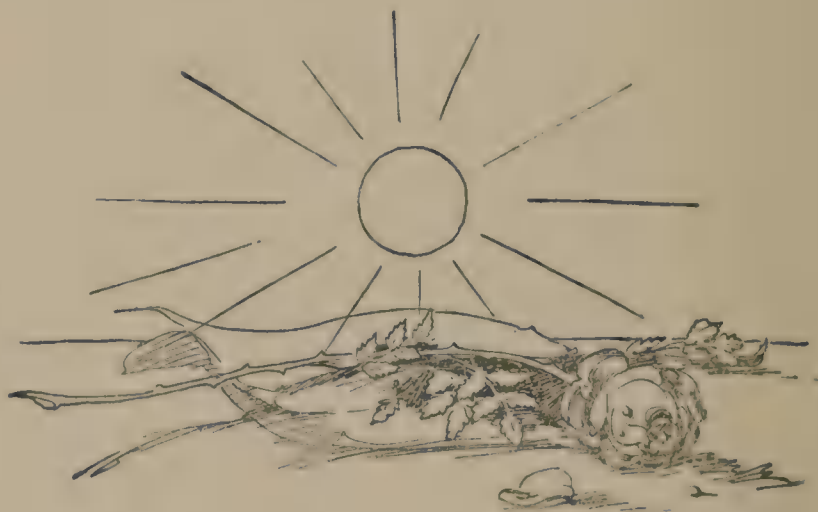
"I desire to call him Jack Pierrot Martin," he said.

So that is the name of the son of Monsieur Jack Martin. He was born last April. He is a beautiful baby but he is not like Pierrot. But I am very glad there is so much for me to do every day for that baby.

Every morning, at the time my Pierrot used to wake and call "Da, Da," I go to where my Pierrot lies sleeping to carry to him a rose which Gaston plucks for me. It makes me very happy to do this and very proud also because when I pass through the village, I hear people say this:

"There goes the mother of Pierrot."

### THE END





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